



FROM THE LIBRARY OF
CALEB ROCHFORD STETSON
PRIEST AND DOCTOR
ELEVENTH RECTOR OF TRINITY PARISH
1921 - 1932

Class

204R

Book

13766a

General Theological Seminary Library

CHELSEA SQUARE, NEW YORK

THE LIFE OF THE SOUL

THE LIFE OF THE SOUL

Jonathan
BY
J. BRIERLEY, 1843-1914

AUTHOR OF "LIFE AND THE IDEAL," "ASPECTS OF THE SPIRITUAL,"
"SIDELIGHTS ON RELIGION," "OURSELVES AND THE UNIVERSE," ETC.

BOSTON: THE PILGRIM PRESS
LONDON: JAMES CLARKE & CO.

1912

204R
B7662
95229

RECEIVED JAN 1950
LIBRARY
JAN 1950

PREFACE

I HAVE given this book the title it bears because it describes, as accurately as any other, the main idea and contents of it. The topics discussed are varied, but they are all gates into the same field. They come back, like radii from a circumference, towards one centre. The object sought in them all has been, starting from these different standpoints, to penetrate the mystery of the soul ; of its life, its faculties, its possibilities, its relation to God, man and the universe. I offer no reasoned philosophy of the theme ; far less a theology. The most I can hope for is that my readers may find here some material for both ; material for suggestion if nothing more. I have written under the conviction that there is nothing that is happening in the crowded field of modern life but finds its explanation in our spiritual condition ; that no one of our pressing problems, whether of labour unrest, of religious difficulty, of social reorganisation, but must seek its solution in the recesses of the soul.

J.B.

London, 1912.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. THE PROBLEM OF FORCE	9
II. CHRISTIANITY AND LIFE	18
III. EQUIVALENTS IN RELIGION	28
IV. OF SEEKING AND FINDING	37
V. THE LIVING PAST	45
VI. OF DEAD PERFECTIONS	54
VII. OUR PERSONAL FORTUNES	64
VIII. THE PRESSURE OF LIFE	72
IX. OF SPECIAL PROVIDENCE	79
X. PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION	89
XI. IS CHRISTIANITY PASSING ?	98
XII. RELIGION AND FEELING	108
XIII. OF HAVING AND GETTING	116
XIV. THE DEEPENING OF LIFE	124
XV. THE HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS	133
XVI. OF NEW INTERESTS	142
XVII. OF JUDGMENT	152
XVIII. OF LIFE VALUES	162
XIX. CO-OPERATION	171
XX. FROM BELOW—UP	180

Contents

	PAGE
XXI. LIFE'S MUSIC	190
XXII. AMALGAMS IN RELIGION	199
XXIII. THE CULT OF IDLENESS	206
XXIV. THE LACK OF GREATNESS	214
XXV. CONCERNING BIG THINGS	224
XXVI. THE DEEPER REASON	234
XXVII. RELIGION AS INWARDNESS	242
XXVIII. THE UNORGANISED FORCES	250
XXIX. THE PRICE OF FEAR	258
XXX. OF SOCIAL INTERCOURSE	266
XXXI. ON DOING THINGS	276
XXXII. THE LIFE BEYOND	286

THE LIFE OF THE SOUL

I

THE PROBLEM OF FORCE

THE problem of force—the ethic of it if you will—has of late been very vividly before us. We have seen capital in arms against labour; each side reckoning up its striking power; labour counting its numbers, its capabilities of offence and resistance; authority calling up its effectives, estimating its reserves. The position means a dozen different things; but unquestionably one of the most prominent of them is a trial of strength. We are not yet at the final end, but that end, whatever it is to be, will have this factor for one of its largest determinants.

In these circumstances, it should be well for us all to ask ourselves some questions about force—what it really means, what part it plays in the system of things, what it can and cannot do, how it is related to a true morality. We are apt to disparage force,—to speak of it as opposed to idealism, as a mere brutality. “Force is no remedy,” said John Bright, on a memorable occasion; and, as he meant it, the word rang true. We shall come to that later. But we need here to know what we are talking about and to use our phrases with a full recognition of the facts.

Let us remember, in the first place, that it is in force, and by means of force, that we live, move, and

The Life of the Soul

have our being. It is by it that our universe came into existence, and that it is kept going from hour to hour. We live by the sun's energy, by the exact adjustment of it to our physical need. Let that energy increase or decrease by ever so little, and we should have no problems on this subject ; we should cease to exist. What this energy is ultimately no man knows ; equally ignorant are we as to how one shade or phase of it passes into another. What we are aware of is that the whole system of things around us is just one stupendous manifestation of sheer power—of power that we did not create, that we cannot by the smallest fraction add to or take from, that seems eternal and indestructible. Our progress as human beings, our progress in living, in civilisation, is a progress in learning its ways, in yoking it to our purpose. Our locomotives, as they tear across continents, our *Lusitanias* conquering ocean with their superb enginry, are triumphs of force ; they are mind's power yoked to nature's power ; the rude, elemental energies of wind and wave outside mastered by these vaster, subtler energies within.

The social order rests on power. In the family, in the school, discipline in the last resort depends on who is strongest. A State exists by the ability to enforce its enactments. Its imperative is an armed imperative. The magistrate has behind him the policeman, and behind the policeman the soldier. There may be vast modifications in these directions in the coming years, but no possible condition of human affairs will ever dispense with the use of force in some form or other. The same thing obtains in the loftiest, in the most spiritual of our experiences.

The Problem of Force

Influence is force, much of which could be translated into terms of mechanics. When an inspired prophet sways men with heaven's own message, how much of his power is purely physical? Diminish at that moment the action of his heart, the flow of blood to his brain, and what would become of his inspiration? The tides of life that are flowing out of him are elemental energies as much beyond his volition to create or increase as are the winds that sweep over the Atlantic, as the waves that roll beneath. To whatever side of life we turn, we find ourselves, then, in a realm of force—a force which begins us, keeps us alive, and in due time ends us, answering meantime no question of ours as to its why or wherefore.

In what has been said, however, we have already made a vast discrimination. Force is everywhere, but in different kinds and qualities. And the lower is everywhere, in the long run, obedient to the higher. The *Lusitania* conquers the ocean because there is more mind in the *Lusitania* than in the ocean. We shall never probably be able to define the difference between mind and matter, nor the way in which one works upon the other. But we know one thing—that mental force is higher than material, and, given free play, will always assert its sovereignty. A single idea, formed in one tiny skull, will chain your Niagara, turn its wild rush into a humble factory-worker. A chemical discovery will supersede any quantity of limb and muscle energy. And in the mental region itself the lower mind is always beaten by the higher mind. That is why the mob will never be master. Your Xerxes with his million is no match for your Miltiades with his few thousands. In a rising your crowd is powerful—for a day or two.

The Life of the Soul

It is powerful to destroy. But because it cannot get bread, nor weave clothes, nor build houses by mere destroying ; because its violence, while mighty at pulling down, is helpless to create, it must needs call out in the end for the maker, the organiser, the man with a brain. Your French Terror ends in a Napoleon. Your thinker, even if he be despot and tyrant, is so much better than your crowd of no-thinkers, and that by the verdict of the crowd itself. After that leaderless stampede, what a relief to them to find themselves once more on the march, with a real thinking-piece at the head of them !

Mind is the force that rules matter ; but what is the force that rules mind ? For mind has its own compulsions, working as surely, as inevitably, as steam in your engine, as gravitation on the whirling planets. But the compulsion is of a different kind ; and it has been one of the tragedies of history that men, through so many ages, and up to our own time, have failed to note the distinction. People have tried to make the mind act as they would make a machine act—by mere physical pressure. They might as well try to set Queen Anne's statue walking down Ludgate Hill by a push from behind. It is amazing, in this long history of mental coercion, how blind men have been to the simplest psychological facts. When Augustine, quoting the text, " Compel them to come in," advocated persecution as a means of spreading the Gospel ; when Gregory the Great ordered his agents in Sicily to " persecute " the tenants on his estate there, and so " reclaim them to the Catholic faith " ; when he wrote to a Sardinian bishop : " If any tenant is obstinate, his rent is to be increased till he is compelled to hasten

The Problem of Force

to the right way " ; when Charlemagne offered the conquered Franks the choice between an immediate acceptance of the faith or of having their throats promptly cut—they were proceeding on the supposition that these were legitimate and practicable ways of creating faith. One wonders that these strong minds did not see that if the endeavour had been legitimate it was utterly impracticable. They might as well have attempted to construct a watch by lighting a bonfire. The process had no relation whatever to the result they wanted. Belief is, indeed, a matter of compulsion, but not of this compulsion. The force that creates it is the force of facts, of evidence, and of the laws of the human mind in relation to these. The sword or the rack may produce fear, submission, or a hypocritical assent ; but belief, or love, never. Force of this kind is indeed " no remedy." Cromwell, who had a considerable acquaintance with force of various sorts, saw clear in this matter. Witness that word of his to Mr. Speaker Lenthall : " And for brethren in things of the mind we look for no compulsion but that of light and reason." A proper psychology, which we are at last coming in sight of, will make it for ever impossible to repeat these ghastly blunders of the past. Men will realise that, as Schopenhauer puts it, " Faith is like love ; it cannot be forced."

We have here reached two grades of force ; first that of the brute elements, of the mechanical energies, of the inherent qualities of things ; and second, that of the intellect, which, in proportion to its height and strength, exercises an ever growing control over the material realm. But ours would be a very poor world were it left to these compulsions alone. Our

The Life of the Soul

reasoning power is good for much, but it is not good enough to make us good. The human consciousness on this subject has been sufficiently expressed in the belief, at the bottom of all the religions, which makes the devil a very clever fellow. You may handle the material forces with consummate skill and turn them to the most infernal uses. And our planet has had, so far, a very considerable experience of this kind of ability. Its gospel has been expressed with admirable succinctness in that devil's gospel, "The Prince" of Macchiavelli, where the men in power are taught all the ways of using it in the interest of their ambitions and of their selfishness. The modern world has seen no clearer intellect than that of Napoleon, and no greater or more mischievous perversion of its power. The mind can be as ruthless as a tornado, and with the destructive force of ten thousand tornadoes. The history of commerce in our time, on both sides of the Atlantic, has shown us how the sheer calculating faculty, urged by the lust of aggrandisement, can become the most tyrannous and devilish of powers; has shown us how forlorn and hopeless were the condition of our species unless some other power, higher than that of the elements, higher than that of mere mentality, can be called in to redress the balance.

There is one. We come here upon another of the world's forces, exercising a compulsion different from any of these others, the story of which opens up another and far more cheering prospect for us. It is the story of conscience, of the moral sense, of the spiritual faculty. This force is the latest to arrive, and at present the weakest, the most intermittent, the least conspicuous in its manifestations. And

The Problem of Force

that of necessity ; that because of its position in the world movement. For it could not appear before long preparation had been made. The brute came before the man ; and the brute in the man came before the man in him. Before morality there had to be animality and mentality. The root is before the flower. Men pessimise because they do not appreciate the leisureliness of the divine order. But its very slowness is the guarantee of its sureness. The immense, age-long process of the foundation-work, instead of stirring our impatience, should make us surer of the solidity of that upper structure which is rising upon it.

This spiritual sense, so slowly emerging upon our world, is also, we say, a compulsion. But, compared with these others, how different its operation ! Compared with them it is as radium is to pitchblende, an essence endowed with such subtler, such mightier powers. As intellect controls the material energies so this controls the intellect. Where it rises to any height in a man it becomes an imperative. Luther's " I can no other " expresses its note of command. And its force lies in its independence of force, of those lower ones. What a power ! which bids the strong man not to use his strength ; which tells the muscled arm not to strike back ; which strips its soldiers of their weapons of violence, of anger, of craft and cunning , and clothes them instead with forgiveness, with trust, with love ! Does not this seem insanity in such a world as ours ? It is the same insanity as that which leads man, accustomed to travel on solid earth, to launch himself in the air. It is the trial of his forces in a new element, where he will have many falls, but in which finally he will fly where

The Life of the Soul

once he walked. What is the real meaning of forgiving your enemy, of using trust instead of cunning, of loving instead of hating? It is no insanity. The method has a perfect *rationale* of its own. It is nothing less than the bold appeal of the spiritual in a man to the spiritual in his fellow. "I have this compulsion in me. Have you the answering compulsion in you? This force which is acting on me from some upper realm is a force which must be acting from that realm on other minds. Is it not acting on yours? My trust in you is a belief that it is so acting."

That is the real meaning of Christianity, the meaning which assures its position as an eternal religion. The significance of Jesus, more than any other significance, is in this—that His life and utterance were the proclamation of this new order of things, of this new force by which man was to be ruled. When, unarmed and defenceless, He said to the Roman power, "My kingdom is not of this world," He spoke the word of inauguration. Over the kingdom of the elemental forces, over the kingdom of the animal, over the kingdom of the intellect, He beheld rising, with Himself as prophet and embodiment, that kingdom of the spiritual whose forces should be those of purity and sacrifice, love and trust, obedience and service. It is the last of the kingdoms because it is highest. Latest and highest, it will be the most enduring, for there is nothing that can take its place.

This spiritual imperative will rule on earth because it rules in heaven. It is the heart of God. In proportion as we find it in ourselves, we feel the surer of Him. What a blindness in that old theology which

The Problem of Force

made it possible for its exponents to think of God as using His power in any other way than love dictates ; which pictured Him as inflicting on His enemies—who were His helpless creatures—Indian slow fire tortures, and that for all eternity ! Were that so, heaven, in its selectest quarters, would be more in need of Christian missions to teach it elementary religion than Central Africa, or a Liverpool slum. Against all that we say, with Emerson, “ No God dare wrong a worm.”

We are, as we have seen, under a reign of forces, They are all there at work, the elemental, the animal, the rational, the spiritual. We note the order of their coming, and the place they occupy. The history of them assures us of their final arrangement. Mind rules the lower world, and love is eventually to rule the mind. This because the infallible wisdom is governed by the eternal love. Our present unrests, our strifes, our up-risings and repressions are marks of the present stage of our evolution. In that evolution the spiritual is only at its beginning. But as surely as mind has mastered matter, so surely will character master mind. The final, compelling force will be, not the clash of swords, the thunder of guns, the issue of edicts, but the still small voice of the purified soul.

II

CHRISTIANITY AND LIFE

WITHIN the lifetime of many of us a revolution has taken place, in the sphere of religion, greater than any that has happened since the introduction of Christianity. The ancient foundation of it has dropped clean away, leaving it, like the planet itself, resting on empty space. Or shall we say, changing the figure, that the entire system of ideas into which it was fitted, as a picture in a frame, has vanished, leaving it naked, as it were, in a new, strange surrounding? The Christianity under which we grew up was not simply a Christology; it was a system which filled heaven and earth, time and space, the world's past history, its future fate. It was an easily measurable and quite water-tight, air-tight system. It was the Bible view of things—a view which placed earth as the centre of the universe, in the centre of events. Heaven above and hell beneath were within convenient distances, and readily accessible. The sun and stars were there to lighten us, to give us day and night. As to history, the world was some six thousand years old, and its end was rapidly approaching. To some of the more active spirits among us in those days there was already, in this closely-knit arrangement, a sense of stifling, a suppressed longing for some force to come that would break holes in it, to let in air, to open a wider prospect.

Christianity and Life

That force has since come with a vengeance ! There seems, indeed, to-day too much air, too wide a prospect. We are apt now to shiver in the cold, to feel ourselves lost and homeless in the immensity that has opened round us. The space walls, the time walls, have both dropped. Instead of being at the centre of things we find ourselves dwellers on a tiny speck of a planet, revolving round a minor star, that is one of thirty million stars telescopically visible to us, with an infinity of others beyond. Instead of an earth history of six thousand years, we are descendants of a race that has dwelt here for hundreds of thousands of years, while the earth itself is old by immeasurable millions. Where, in these conditions, is heaven ? Where is hell ? Where, indeed, is religion ? Talk of revelation ! There has surely been no religious revelation comparable to this. It is a revelation which in itself is also a revolution.

Not less wonderful, not less portentous, has been the religious revelation which has opened by the birth in us of the historic sense, and its application to the Scripture narratives. For long ages and right into our own time, devout men had read the Bible, drawing from it inestimable values of faith and holiness, yet without the faintest suspicion of the evidence about its own growth, its place in world literature, which it contained within itself. Instead of being an infallible production, dictated word by word to writers who were simply the pen used by invisible hands, we find it a work developed under homely human conditions, a collection of writings representing various grades of knowledge and morality, containing early mythologies, folk lore,

The Life of the Soul

history, edited and re-edited at various periods by writers who idealised the story in accordance with their own prepossessions, with their own ideas of religious edification. We are able to estimate the value of the history from the history itself. The Pentateuch, for instance, we know was brought into its final form by priestly scribes after the return from the exile. They gave an account of the beginnings of Israel conformed to the views of their own time. How far it conformed to fact may be easily ascertained by anyone who takes the trouble to read, say, Leviticus and Joshua, and to compare their accounts with the Book of Judges. In Joshua we get a terrifying story of the miraculous destruction of the Canaanites by the divinely-led Jewish people. They are annihilated, exterminated root and branch. We turn to Judges, describing the succeeding period, and behold! these annihilated Canaanites are still there—in their lands, their walled cities, with their civilisation, their gods, all alive and flourishing! It is a marvellous resurrection! More, in Leviticus and elsewhere in the Pentateuch we read of the establishment of a full-blown ecclesiastical system, with a tabernacle, sacrifices, an elaborate ritual, a high priest and a subordinate priestly hierarchy, a day of atonement; in fact, a church machinery of the completest kind. We turn again to Judges, to find, in what is supposed to be the immediately succeeding period, absolutely no trace of all this. Instead, a primitive religion, with no high priest, no tabernacle, but a simple, barbarous cult, where laymen offer sacrifices in their own way and in any place that suits them. We see what has happened. The priestly scribes of the post-exilic period have

Christianity and Life

transferred the church system they had themselves elaborated back to the beginning of the Jewish history. And they did this in entire good faith, for the modern conception of what constitutes history was yet unborn. So naïve was their view of it that, happily for us, they left that earlier material of Judges side by side with their own, and thus supplied us with the evidence for a reconstruction of the entire story.

We have had, we say, in these last years, a real religious revelation, a revelation about revelation. It has shown us that whatever Divine teaching has reached our race has reached it through man himself ; taking him, at each stage, just as he is, with all his limitations, his ignorance, his varying moral stages ; acting upon him, in fact, in accordance with his receptive faculty. It has reached him, not to supply him with supernatural knowledge, but as a reinforcement of his inner life, a heightening of its quality. This, which we see in the Old Testament, is exactly what we find in the New. The New Testament is just as full of the purely human elements as we find to exist in the Old. A more accurate research is continually exploding myths as to its formation and its contents. One of the latest of these, still strongly contended for by influential writers, is as to the absolutely unanimous apostolic testimony on the person and work of Christ. There is no such unanimity. The unique phenomenon of Jesus is a life fact which brought about in those who first looked upon it an adoring bewilderment and a vast variety of interpretation. The actual apostles of the Master, those who companied with Him in His earthly career, had one view. What it was is shown us by

The Life of the Soul

their conduct and teaching. They dwelt in Jerusalem, were the pillars of the Jerusalem Church. That Church, under their influence, was the chief opponent of St. Paul. It was from Jerusalem that the emissaries came who dogged his footsteps in Galatia and elsewhere, denouncing him as a false apostle, and against whom his own fiercest words were written. It has recently been contended that the differences here were slight, having affair only with matters of ecclesiastical procedure. Let anyone who thinks so read over again the apostle's letter to the Galatians. It is evident the writer does not think so. The difference to him is vital; is an affair of his status as an apostle, of the validity of his commission, of the reality or non-reality of the Gospel he preached. We see the vast gulf that divided the two schools. The one at Jerusalem held the Church to be a revised Judaism, the Christ a Messiah of the Jews, that the Christian salvation was a Jewish salvation. St. Paul, on the contrary, saw in Christ the breaker of the wall of partition, the Saviour, not of a race, but of a world. It is a tolerably wide distinction.

Was, then, the one apostle all right, and the others all wrong? Not at all. St. Paul was full of ideas that have long since been outgrown. His thought about the world and the human race was according to the ideas, the knowledge of his time. His universe was geo-centric, of the pre-Copernican order. A School Board teacher of to-day, by a series of elementary lessons, would have revolutionised his ideas about world history and human history. Could he come amongst us again, in this twentieth century, he would be the first to recognise that the Christianity

Christianity and Life

he preached, so far as it related itself to scientific knowledge, would require a complete re-setting. How far would that re-setting have gone? It is here, indeed, we come upon the question of questions, that of the relation of Christianity to life. It is, we venture to say, when we confront fairly that question—confront it in the light of all the knowledge that has since come to us—that we find the solution of all our Biblical difficulties; difficulties both of the Old Testament and the New.

The Bible, from first to last, is nothing less than the story of evolution; of the evolution of the spiritual life in man. All the evidence goes to show that this story is full of a divine, we will say, of a supernatural element. But the supernatural is of a different order, working in another way, from that which an earlier stage conceived. When Matthew Arnold said, "Miracles do not happen," he would have brought the saying nearer to accuracy if he had said, "The miracles recorded by rabbis and monkish chroniclers do not happen." We know the part which the mythopœic faculty has played in all the world's sacred books. When, for instance, the modern rationalist, commenting on the birth and other miracle stories of the Gospels, reminds us of similar histories elsewhere—of the account given by Suetonius of the birth of Augustus as son of Apollo; of the immaculate conception of Buddha from Maya; of Bacah in Yucatan, as after his death, rising after three days and ascending to heaven; of the resurrection of the slain Dionysus, and his festival in spring; and of the Scandinavian Baldur as rising again after forty days—when our rationalist recounts all this, we acknowledge his right to be

The Life of the Soul

heard. There are mythologies in all the early faiths, and they are not absent from the Bible. They arise out of a common mental state ; they are the product of a common stage in mental evolution. It is assuredly not from them we get our belief in the supernatural, the supernatural in the Bible and in Christianity.

Where, then, and what, is this supernatural? We find it in the very last place where some of our conservative brethren would go to look for it—in the evolution of life, and, above all, of the spiritual life. That evolution is the ultimate fact of world movement, the one and only way of it, should be sufficiently evident to anyone who will take the trouble to look for a moment into himself, and take note of what he finds there. Let him ask how any idea forms itself in his mind. It shall be any idea you choose, whether in architecture, or painting, or music, or some simple household subject. It works, we say, always in one way—from below upwards. It begins in a dimness, a confusion, a nebula ; and from that it moves towards clearness, towards articulation, towards completeness. It begins, in short, as a mental foetus going through various foetal stages, till it is ready to bring to the birth. Always from below up, from confusion to order. That is how everything begins, and how everything goes on. Now this, which happens in you, has happened to the world. It has been that order for the soul of man. That it is a divine, supernatural order is shown from the fact that the evolution has always worked in one direction ; the upward direction ; the lower to something higher ; the crude good to the succeeding better. How is it that things did not stand still,

Christianity and Life

or that moving they should have moved upwards rather than downwards? That is where direction comes in; where God comes in. Darwin, and still more the later evolutionists, saw this. The one thing they could not explain on any naturalistic hypothesis, was in variation; in the fact that things should start changing, and changing upwards. Why should life beget a better life? There is no answer, except in a power behind life, greater than its present expressions, a power which is moving it to greater ends.

And this is the miraculous as we now know; it is the upward push of life to some new, nobler manifestation. No force of mere mechanism can explain it. It is a result of energy from another sphere. And this which we find in nature, which a De Vries exhibits to us in botany, is exhibited on its grandest scale on the field of history, and, above all, in that history which the Bible discloses to us. We see there a Bedouin tribe from the Arabian desert, whose god is one of many, a tribal, hill god, brought through the ages to a sense of an all holy, righteous, redeeming God. We see this people producing out of the old savage, warrior caste men of another mould, prophets of a new order, men willing to sacrifice their all for the true and the good. And, finally, in the New Testament time, we have a birth as truly miraculous as that of the beginning of life on the earth, as the appearance on it of the first man; that truly of a Beginner, the First Born of many brethren. You need no birth mythologies to maintain the supernaturalness of Christ. It is there in Him; in His word, His life. And it is precisely because He represents a new, unique order

The Life of the Soul

of being ; because He exhibits a fresh spiritual order of life, that we find explanation of those varying accounts of Him which have so puzzled the later interpreters. If half a dozen grades of intellect give half a dozen descriptions of a beetle, what shall we expect of half a dozen men, all various in temperament, in brain power—call them apostles, evangelists, or what you will—who endeavour to explain to us the miracle of Jesus ! And yet amid all those varieties of statement—the statements of the synoptists, of the Johannine tradition, of the Jerusalem school, of St. Paul himself—we find one startling, all-suggestive unity. Their varying points of view lead all back to one centre ; to the feeling that in Jesus was a new life, a life which He had communicated to themselves. The Fourth Gospel expresses it in those wonderful words : “ I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly.” St. Paul’s gospel is essentially that of a higher life that had come into and mastered his own ; the sense of Christ being born in him the hope of glory, the knowledge that the life he lived was no longer his own, but an existence, dominated in its inmost recesses by One who “ loved him and had given Himself for him.” And the synoptic Gospels are the exhibition of what that life was, revealed in a teaching which has revolutionised the world, in a career of spotless beauty, of completest sacrifice.

With all this before us how, in this twentieth century, does Christianity stand ; how stands revelation ? The two things stand indeed, as we have seen, in a vastly different framework from that presented by the old, the pre-scientific ages. But the chief difference between them is that, whereas the old

Christianity and Life

conceptions have been proved false and untrustworthy, the newer one has placed both Christianity and revelation on a foundation that is for ever impregnable. It is the spiritual application of what all science is teaching. Evolution is the doctrine of a perpetual new creation. Christianity is the doctrine of new creatures in Christ Jesus. The Bible revelation is seen as that of the Divine Idea expressing itself in humanity ; showing there first in lowly forms, in childish conceptions, but rising ever into greater clearness, until in Christ we see it blazing forth as that of a redeeming purpose, whose end is in the perfecting of man, his body, soul and spirit. And thus we have in Christianity an eternal Gospel, since it is the Gospel of an eternal life.

III

EQUIVALENTS IN RELIGION

HÖFFDING, in his "Philosophy of Religion," has an arresting utterance which may serve as an introduction to what we have here to say. "We cannot," he observes, "live on residues. Protestantism is a residue, and this is even truer of Pietism and Rationalism. But neither can we live on substitutes. We must have equivalents. And the great question here is whether equivalents are possible." The problem which Höffding here propounds is one which is everywhere profoundly exercising the modern mind. It is stated even more strongly, and much more despairingly, by Maeterlinck, where he says: "Until now men passed from a crumbling temple into one that was building; they left one religion to enter another. Whereas we are abandoning ours to go nowhither. That is the new phenomenon, with unknown consequences, wherein we live." In both these passages the general idea is that, so far as religion is concerned, we have lost something; that the modern soul has had certain possessions taken out of it that used to belong there. The question that remains is as to the value of what has gone; and whether we have discovered anything as good to put in its place.

It may be useful here, following Höffding's line, to ask what it was that Protestantism offered in place of

Equivalents in Religion

the Romanism which it had left, and then to see how in still later developments, this profit and loss account has been balanced. The grand outstanding feature of Catholicism, in the day of its supremacy—and it was a grand, yes, a magnificent feature—was that it proposed of itself to fill and satisfy the entire mind and soul of man. It gave a religious account of life and of the universe which had the merit of completeness. Its creed embraced the beginning and the end of things, and all that was between. The “Summa” of Aquinas, which even to-day is regarded by Rome as the standing exposition of its doctrine, contained all the science and philosophy of the time. That was for the intellect; and it sufficed then for its needs. But that was only a part, a small part, of the appeal. The mediæval man did not want much in the way of abstract thinking. His highway of approach was through the senses, and Rome has always known that road well. By her buildings, her pictures, her images, her processions, her music, her incense, she entered all the gates of the soul. The eye, the ear, the feeling of movement, the very sense of smell, all were assailed; made the captive of her charms. Even God Himself was materialised. In the tremendous ceremony of the Mass she presented to the awestruck multitude what she declared to be God—God to be seen, handled, tasted. Her very doctrine was a material presentation, an appeal to the senses. Heaven and hell were places close at hand, one above, the other beneath. Both were stocked with the things they saw and felt around them. Heaven was a palace and a summer garden; hell a torture-dungeon of the same sort as their own, only much worse. When you add to this

The Life of the Soul

Rome's far-reaching Church discipline, and her confessional system, which probed the secret thoughts of the heart, you have here a religion which might fairly claim to cover the whole of life.

We have now to ask how the early Protestantism, in its breach with Catholicism, offered an equivalent. Let us remember, first of all, that the breach was a very partial one. The Reformers, setting up business on their own account, took over a large proportion of the Romanist stock-in-trade. Their views of creation, of Biblical inspiration, of the Trinity, of heaven and hell, of the fall and human depravity, of the Atonement, of election and predestination, were largely those of the old faith. Luther and Calvin were in these matters the heirs of Augustine. The difference between the systems lay, for one thing, in the great gap which Protestantism, of set purpose, had left open in that region, which Rome had so lavishly occupied, the region of the senses. The worship of the Reformed congregations was, as we know, of the severest simplicity. The old buildings had been stripped of ornament, the new ones were bare conventicles. There was the pulpit, the black-gowned preacher, the open Bible, the psalm, the preached Word. That, so far as the outward was concerned, was all. It was enough, and more than enough, for those on whom the reformed doctrine had taken genuine hold, but there is no question that for the general, uninformed multitude the loss of the outside ceremonial was severely felt. In the Anglican homily on "The Place and Time of Prayer," there is quoted the remark of a woman to a neighbour, which expresses what was doubtless a widely-spread feeling among

Equivalents in Religion

the masses : “ Alas ! gossip, what shall we do now at church since all the saints are taken away, since all the goodly sights we were wont to see are gone, since we cannot hear like piping, singing, chanting, and playing upon organs that we had before ? ”

That there was here a loss on a certain side of the religious life, especially in its relation to the less thoughtful of the community, need hardly be questioned. That Protestantism has since recognised the fact is shown in the efforts now made among all its Churches, by architecture, by music, and in other ways, to give a place to the senses in its religious appeal. And it will do more in that direction yet. The senses are as much of God as the intellect. They are a part of His kingdom in man, meant to be trained and used for glorious issues in His service. All this notwithstanding, it is safe to say that early Protestantism, in the sphere of its spiritual operation, offered more than an equivalent to Catholicism as a religious force. If we regard the religious value as a value for character, for the making of life, we have only to examine its results here to be assured of this. Amongst its adherents it removed the priest, to put in his place an awakened conscience and the sense of the immediate presence of God. To the reformer, the Puritan, the unseen was the true real. These men walked in a light which revealed, and which also searched. They felt their inmost soul as open and naked before Him with whom they had to do. Their faith put a supreme value on the individual. And that idea was the germ of a whole new development. It meant, for one thing, freedom. The man, responsible to God for his character, for the betterment of his

The Life of the Soul

nature, must, to that end, have room to grow in, liberty to seek the truth, and be established in it. Cut loose from the priest, he must exercise his own judgment, stand on his own feet. What that has meant for the race the subsequent history of the Protestant nations has sufficiently revealed. The progress of the world has been the progress of these peoples. It is the progress of Germany, of Great Britain, of the United States, of Canada, of the English-speaking races. The movement of other nations has been the following of their lead. On the whole, Protestantism, as a system of life, has shown a more than full equivalent for what it has lost.

There opens here, however, another chapter. The early Protestantism, in common with the Catholicism from which it came out, possessed among its motive powers a host of ideas and beliefs which modern science and criticism have tended to dissipate. The Copernican astronomy uprooted some of the deepest religious conceptions. Melancthon felt all this when he denounced the views of Copernicus as an impious and dangerous heresy. The doctrine that our earth, which had been regarded as the centre of things, with heaven above, and hell beneath, was simply the minor planet of a minor star, lost in an immensity of other worlds, was a staggerer to faith. Where was heaven now? Where hell? There was no longer an "up" and a "down." To go up in England and in Australia, would be to move in opposite directions. Then came geology, which revolutionised time as astronomy had revolutionised space. It put back the world's existence, from the few thousand years of the old belief, back to immeasurable æons. Evolution

Equivalents in Religion

finished the process by giving us a doctrine of man, his origin and history, frankly at issue with that of the old theology. All this has brought religion to the cross roads. It is in the presence of a revolution, which, throughout Christendom, has brought masses of people, of all ranks, outside its organisations. They have, as Maeterlinck puts it, left the old temple, with no new one ready to receive them.

Observe now what has happened. Amongst the intellectuals the first result of the new teaching was a rebound to scientific materialism. The supernatural was gone, and was to be replaced by naturalism. The world we live in was the only world we knew. We were under a reign of matter and force, and had to make our terms with that. Our business was to master the facts around us, to ascertain the laws of them, and to live accordingly. But the few decades which have passed since the starting of this *régime* have served to prove its utter inadequacy as an equivalent for the old faith. It was ascertained that it ignored the most clamant needs of the soul. In France we see intellectuals like Brunetière, Huysmans, Bourget, Coppée, going over to Catholicism, because they were convinced of "the utter bankruptcy of science," as of itself an inspirer of life. Meantime, in Germany and amongst other Continental peoples, we see the working classes, embracing an anti-Christian Socialism, as for them the one saving faith.

It is here worth noting—the point is, indeed, to us one of profound significance—that the way in which Rome won her victories among the rude peoples of the dark ages, is, with a difference, the very way in which Socialism is gaining the masses

The Life of the Soul

in modern Europe. It is by the appeal to the senses. Rome pushed her religion by materialising it. She offered it through the eye and the ear; through hopes and fears of physical pleasures and pains. True, she had something higher behind that, and here is the difference between her faith and that of the Socialist. The prophets of the latter cult appeal to the senses and the appetites as the beginning and the end. The "things behind," the invisibles of dogmatic religion they declare are an illusion. Their followers are to concentrate on the only real things; the goods of the present life; the things they can see, hear, taste, touch and handle. The one object of their striving is to have all these good things properly shared up. The world of the present life is the cake, of which some few are getting an inordinate slice. Let there be a redistribution, by which everyone shall have his mouthful, and the human problem is solved.

This is what is proposed, and accepted by millions of working men, as the equivalent for the old faith, the old religion. It is safe to say that only the intense absorption of both leaders and followers in the business of getting there, of realising their programme, can explain the blindness which it exhibits to life's actual facts. Do these people suppose that a sufficiency—nay, an utmost surfeit—of this world's goods can bring content and happiness to man? The briefest glance at the classes who possess these things should prove to them the contrary. To be well fed, to be well leisured, to be well amused; is that all? The moment our Socialists reached that position would be the moment of their disillusion. For it is to reckon without the human

Equivalents in Religion

position, without the human soul. For man, however well fed, cannot get away from the infinite, from the eternal. Whatever his creed, or no creed, these surround him, and claim their part in him. He cannot get away from the question, "What am I, whence came I, whither go I?" He cannot get away from the immense pressures of conscience, of the moral sense, of sin, of suffering, of bereavement, of death. He cannot get away from the pressure of the ideals which haunt him, ideals which spring out of the very nature of his soul. He cannot get away from the pursuit of happiness, nor from the fact that happiness is found, not in the senses nor the appetites, but in a spiritual condition. When Socialism has won its victories it will then meet its problem, and find that it can be solved in only one way. It will verify once more that word of Tertullian: "Wherever the soul comes to itself, as out of a surfeit, or a sleep, or a sickness, and attains something of its natural soundness, it speaks of God."

The question remains, Have we to-day, visible to us, an equivalent for all the losses which religion, which Christianity, in the movements we have sketched, appears to have sustained? One might first ask, "Do we need equivalents? Are not many of the things we call losses really gains?" Have we lost anything worth keeping? We do not believe it. In the physical world no atom of matter or force is ever destroyed, and that obtains, be sure, in deeper things. All of spiritual power that has ever been in the world is here now. No true prayer ever uttered, no noble deed, no sacrifice, no beautiful life, no soul's aspiration, no effort of love, no gain of purity, but is, in its essence, everlasting, ever-

The Life of the Soul

working. All these beautiful inner things are now in our world, surrounding us, working upon us, moving forces of the universal redemption.

And, finally, we have Christ, His life and teaching, to which both the Church and the world will have to come back. We remember here Lessing's word: "Christianity has been tried for eighteen centuries, while the religion of Christ has yet to be tried." All our apparent losses will be more than made up if they bring us back to Him. Consider His teaching and life; the things He cared for; and contrast them with the fussy worries of the after theology! He shows no concern about the age of the world, or the age of man; He does not trouble about astronomy or geology, as in any way affecting the spiritual life. The creeds are full of difficulties which are not His difficulties. The difference between His teaching and that both of Rome and of the Socialists is that whereas they materialise the spiritual, He spiritualised the material. His teaching is full of the material, but always to show its spiritual meaning and purpose. His business is the secret of the true life—about setting man's soul right with itself and with its Origin; to base life upon the only true foundations, upon holiness, truth, and love. And when all the systems, theological, scientific, Socialistic, have run their course and had their day, it is to that point, and nowhere else, the weary spirits of men will come, to find their rest.

IV

OF SEEKING AND FINDING

A WATCHER of the skies, looking down upon our movements on this earth, might describe us as a world of seekers. And he would not be far out. Every living thing is engaged on a perpetual search. The flowers, the trees seek for air and light. The animals, small and great, are on an incessant quest for food. And ourselves : every sense, every faculty in us, is busy on this one thing. Our eye waits for vision, our ear for sounds, our appetite for its satisfaction. Every emotion is a search. Revenge is on the trail for its victim ; curiosity hunts for news ; science hunts for facts ; love is eager for answering love. And if our watcher carried his observations still further, and investigated our findings, he would see that his first description still answered. For our finds end always in a further search. They are never ends but beginnings. They serve only to feed our insatiable appetite for seeking. The whole business is a deep one ; deeper than any of us know. Indeed, we might be designated as blind seekers, for we are mainly after what we cannot see. Neither in our seeking nor our finding do we ever fully comprehend what we are after. The one thing we know here is that all the waters of these varied fountains never quench our thirst. We are as eager at the end as at the beginning. Let every

The Life of the Soul

visible tangible object of desire be attained ; it is only to start us on a vaster longing. The infinity of man is found in the infinitude of his desire.

There have been grim philosophers who have fastened on this feature of life as the proof of its futility, as the ground of pessimism. Schopenhauer makes it one of his leading arguments. Our desires, our seekings, he says, torture us, by their restless activity ; their satisfaction is only a satiety, and so the circle of misery is complete. We deny both the statement and the inference. Let anyone examine his own experience. Have we found the search a painful thing ? Has the student found it so in his quest for knowledge ; or the lover as he waits and works for the answering love ? The gold seeker as he prospects, as he toils with pick and shovel, is a merry fellow. He enjoys the quest though the find may be long deferred. The pleasure of the chase is more in the chase than the fox brush at the end. And the seeking by no means ends in the finding. It has results, values of its own which are to be reckoned in, of which we shall have more to say later. The philosophy of seeking and finding, if we only carry it deep enough, will come out not as a pessimistic but as a very optimistic philosophy.

Let us look first into this question of seeking. On a long sea voyage one gets sometimes a sinister experience which may serve as illustration for what we have here to say. Looking out from the stern of the ship one sees sometimes the flash of a solitary fin, that lifts itself for a moment above the waves and then disappears. It is a shark that is following us. Does it get the scent of our flesh there ? Has it intuition of any sick person aboard whose body

Of Seeking and Finding

may by and by be dropped into the deep? It is hopeful, perhaps, that *you* may drop over! Supposing you did, it would probably find you. But what would it find? The answer is hardly flattering to our self-esteem. You may be a person of ability, of wealth, of political or social ambitions, of high spiritual aspiration. Would it find any of that? It would find simply an edible, a gorge of flesh, which is what it is after. Yet all these other things, or some of them, are in *you*, *are* you. But it finds what it seeks, the lowest of you, and that because it has no power of seeking anything else. If instead of this hungry monster a friend had found you, how different his finding! He would have met and rejoiced in your intelligence, your affection, your soul. To find the best things, we need, it is evident, a power of seeking. It is the developing of this power, the lifting it to its highest terms, that makes all the difference to life. In the things around us, the humblest-seeming, all manner of treasures are locked up. We may imagine we have found them, are possessed of them, and we have found no more of them than the shark who makes a meal of us.

It is when we consider this side of the matter that many things which are otherwise dark become clearer to us. Take, for instance, man's quest of truth, above all of religious truth. Why is it, we ask, that more has not been revealed, that the oracle remains so dumb, that questions of such importance are left in such a haze of doubt? Age after age the cry has gone up for light, for the clear heavenly utterance that would dispel for ever our dubieties. And there is neither light nor voice. We progress into deeper uncertainties. What our fathers held

The Life of the Soul

to be the surest evidence, the indubitable note from above, reveals to the critical investigation of our time its lamentable lack of proof. Our only certainty is that things are uncertain. Renan said, and we believe it, that religion would survive all its illusions. But meantime the discovery of our illusions is a most depressing business. Why is it that things are so ; that the Bible is so different from what the fathers took it to be ; that Church dogma is so easily, so fatally assailed ? Are we shut up here to a pessimistic conclusion ; to a belief in the divine indifference ; that the human quest and aspiration are all a futility ! Our pessimism here arises from our habit of looking at the matter from the wrong end. We fail to see that the spiritual education of the race has been so far an education mainly of its faculty of search. To disclose all would be to stop the development of the soul. What it needs above all else is the cult of its seeking power. In its earlier stage, and even in its present stage, it has no more faculty of finding than has the shark in pursuit of its prey. Man hankers after the lower things, even the lower religious things, and the " no " with which his research is so persistently met is the process by which he is being trained to understand his universe, by which his search power is being raised to the degree in which the highest in the universe may unfold its secret. While we are in the shark stage we seek as the shark does, and for the shark objects. We shall reach the revelation when we are equal to it.

The world is slowly beginning to understand the cosmic way of dealing with us. Science here has proved itself a better learner than theology. In the early ages theology posed as the recipient of all sorts

Of Seeking and Finding

of truths let down from heaven. It was sure of its fact ; sure, before it had troubled to examine it—to find whether it was fact. The advent of genuine science was the advent of a new method. And the irony of the thing here is that while ecclesiasticism was declaring itself to be the one revealer of the divine way, it was left for science to show that *its* way was heaven's way, while the theologic way was of the earth, earthy. It was science that grasped the cosmic idea ; the idea that the celestial reticence was to teach man the true seeking ; to educate his eye, his ear, his thought. It was science which found that in proportion as this culture went on, in that proportion the world secrets opened, the universe became intelligible. To-day, happily, theology is now itself on the road which science opened, and is trying to discover truth in the only way it can be discovered ; not by the noisy shoutings of Church councils, not by the so-called infallible dicta of popes, but by patient, humble research.

When we are once on this, the right road of seeking, it is wonderful how things open to us. To him that hath is given ; to him that hath the trained faculty, the opened eye. We speak often of accidental discoveries, of how men searching for one thing find another. Madame Curie was not looking for radium when she found it. The scientist who found bromine was experimenting with sea water, expecting by passing chlorine gas through it he would get iodine. What he got was not iodine but bromine. Marconi discovered wireless telegraphy in a similar haphazard way. Would Newton have found out gravitation had the apple not fallen from the tree ? But there are really no accidents here. Millions of apples

The Life of the Soul

had fallen from trees the ages through, and nobody thought of gravitation. It took a Newton to make that use of the apple. And all these other seemingly accidental discoveries; what is the real story of them? It is in every instance that of trained minds concentrated on groups of facts, facts which, as one after another they leaped into view, flashed back their secret to the insight which beheld them. Call them accidents if you will, but they are accidents which never happen to bungling seekers.

The history of illusion—and what a history that is—is the story of bad seeking. Erasmus tells a funny story of a group of people in England who were watching a sunset. Suddenly a wag amongst them exclaimed: “Do you see that great dragon there, with fiery tail and flaming eyes?” People strained their eyes. “I see it,” said one; “and I,” said another, not to be outdone. Soon the report of the awful portent was spread over the country, causing widest consternation. It is so easy for people to see what they want to see. That is the origin of innumerable miracle stories. Before a saint can be introduced to the Roman Calendar, a certain quantity of miracles have to be credited to him. And they are readily forthcoming. The wonder stories of Francis of Assisi, as recorded by Bonaventura, are astonishing enough. We are very sure they would not have happened, or been recorded, had he lived in our time. Our world is saturated with the supernatural, but it is of a different sort from that recorded by monkish chroniclers.

Thus far, we have been speaking, and perhaps at too great length, of seeking on its purely intellectual side. But there is another seeking, another

Of Seeking and Finding

training of research, of even deeper importance than that of the reason. A man's spiritual education may be spoken of as a training in the proper estimation of values. We all begin with the shark. Like him we seek for something to eat. And we go on from that. As life progresses all the senses offers their values. And there are multitudes who seek and find little value in anything else. A Roman epicure committed suicide because his sensual excesses had reduced his fortune to eighty thousand pounds. He found life no longer worth living with so small a provision for his appetites. But where the soul is awake, where it has opened itself to the divine invitations that reach it, new standards of value arise. It finds new objects of search. It finds a new value in the world around it. As the real contents of a man are not discernible by a shark, so the real qualities of things are infinitely beyond the unseeing eye. The enlightened mind is filled with reverence, with wondering awe, in presence of the humblest objects around it. Matter, in the view of modern science, is becoming an intensely spiritual thing. Behind the stone, the flower—within them we may say—are wonders beyond words.

Research here is a growing aid to faith. Supposing that inquiry had shown the universe as inferior to what the early ignorance had conceived of it ! But, on the contrary, it shows it as ever more wonderful, fuller of grandeur, mind, and power. And if this be so on the material side, can we suppose that research into the moral, the spiritual, will have any different result ? Faith and knowledge go here hand in hand. The revelation is always of something greater than we knew before. If there is infinite

The Life of the Soul

power, can we doubt that the spiritual correlatives of power, that love, that holiness, are less than infinite? The soul as it grows, becomes ever more sure of this, engages with an ever increasing ardour in the search for the highest good. It seeks it, and finds it, in God; it seeks and finds it in man. It seeks it in all life's experiences, the darkest not excepted. Behind pain and loss and grief it is sure of a good concealed. Christ's Calvary proved that, and man's Calvary holds always a like treasure. Finally it unites itself, in indissoluble bonds, with the ultimate Good, and says with à Kempis: "I would rather be poor for Thy sake than rich without Thee. I choose rather to be a pilgrim with Thee on the earth than without Thee to possess heaven. For where Thou art there is heaven; but where Thou art not is death and hell." Here, now, and in all worlds, is the true seeking and the true finding.

V

THE LIVING PAST

RITSCHL, the German theologian, who has enriched religious thought in so many directions, had a curious animus against metaphysics. They had done so much, he said, to misrepresent and to disparage Christianity. Undoubtedly he had good grounds for that opinion. There have been bad metaphysics and especially bad Christian metaphysics. But to condemn metaphysics as a whole is like condemning the action of the heart. They are in us, and we cannot get on without them. We all of us carry a metaphysician inside us—of varying qualities. To the extent in which we are thinkers, we find ourselves facing questions which lie behind the visible; we want to know the meaning of life, the meaning of ourselves; we want, if we can, to get into contact with the ultimate realities. One of these final questions is as to the idea of time, and of our relation to it. Bergson has of late been shaking up all our notions on that subject; has been exposing the incurably bad habits which philosophy for ages has been cultivating in its discussion of the theme. We do not propose here to deal with the special points which he raises, but rather to deal with the illusion which we have all been cherishing—that of the dead-and-goneness of the past. We speak and think continually of the past as something finished;

The Life of the Soul

of the present as the only alive. There is a sense, of course, in which that is true. There is all the difference between yesterday and to-day. But it is only a very partial truth. If the past is dead, it is, like all other kinds of death, by no means an extinction. If the past dies, it dies to rise again, in another form, but a form which is mighty and vital. We propose here to see in various directions how this truth is brought home to us.

We have spoken of the present. We say often it is the one thing we possess. But has it occurred to us that we should know no present apart from the past; that the present contains the past as an essential part of it? At this moment we are feeling things; seeing things. But we should at this moment never see or feel anything were it not for the moments before. A perception which was alive only in this moment would be no perception. The tree we see would be no tree were it not that previous perceptions had given us the idea of a tree. Everything we look at is to us what it is through the memory we retain of previous seeings with which this moment's view is connected. The actual moment would be for us the barest edge of sensation were it not for all the past moments which our consciousness brings into it. This, which is true of seeing, is not less true of all other operations of the senses. Take that, for instance, of hearing. What are you doing when you enjoy your Mozart or Beethoven? If you had only what you call the living present, you would get none of their music. The sound you hear conveys nothing apart from the sound you have just heard. It is the passage from that which has been to that which is, the movement,

The Living Past

that is, of the music from one phrase to another—one heard, the other remembered—that gives the growing harmony all its meaning. It is so on every side of consciousness. Your joy in meeting your friend would be no joy if the present meeting were all. It is the memory of all your past meetings, of what your consciousness treasures of all your past intercourse, that gives the significance to this actual now.

Take another line. You have your body to-day. When you got up, you washed it and clothed it and fed it. Here it is, in actual possession ; your eyes, your ears, your limbs, your entire personality, as you find it in this year and day of grace. It is an affair of the present, yet all your past is living in it ; the past, not only of your actual life since birth, but of all the ages and æons since things began. If in all these measureless spaces behind ; if in all the epochs of animal and vegetable life, in all the geologic ages, back to the nebula of the star that started us, one atom of the material in us had acted differently from how it did act ; if one cell of the countless billions of cells and their ancestors that have worked in us had shown some variation from its ordered course, you would not have been what you are at this moment. And this which is true of your physical formation is not less true of your character, your soul. Your way of looking at things, of deciding upon things ; your temperament and disposition ; the words and deeds that make you esteemed or otherwise ; what is all this ? We speak of it as partly inherited, and that is another push of the past inside you. But when, in addition, we speak of your own free will ; of your free action as a moral agent, we

The Life of the Soul

are still in the same region. It is in the sum of your past decisions and actions ; in the deeds that have led to habits, that we seek your present character. Here again your past has made your present. You are what you have done.

We think of the past as alive in memory. But what we actually recollect is only the smallest part of what is stored there. There are underground reservoirs, which preserve our story, and where no detail is lost. What comes to view in recollection is only a stream from those vast storehouses. There are moments—they say they come to people in drowning—when things for years forgotten come back in minutest detail. There are, in fact, memories all over us. Think of our automatic actions. We walk without thinking about it. But there was a time when walking was a conscious effort ; when every step needed the full concentration of our mind and will. What is the meaning of the change ? It means that the memory has got from our minds into our limbs. The muscles, the nerves now recollect for us, and do the walking without troubling our brains. We walk automatically to-day because our past initial efforts are living in us now.

The past is a reservoir of incalculable forces. We have no instruments for measuring its power. You can make approximate estimates in material things. Geologists can measure our coal beds and reckon up their probable output and duration. Astronomers can offer guesses as to the total energy of the sun. But who shall figure out for us the energy of a great action ? The battle of Waterloo is still acting on all the European destinies. France, Germany, England, Russia, are all in their present

The Living Past

position and policy, feeling its impact. The American War of Independence is vital at this moment in every American institution, in every phase of its life, in the soul of every citizen. Said Carlyle to Emerson as they looked at a church spire, "Christ died on the Cross, and His death built that church." If you could estimate in foot-tons the energy which has gone to the rearing of all the Christian structures from the first Good Friday till now, you would have an idea of the merely physical forces that have streamed out from that death. And what measure would this be of the moral and spiritual forces which, streaming from that centre, have wrought in all the succeeding centuries, and are working here to-day? You may imagine the physical forces as diminishing in their operation, in the ratio of their distance. But the moral energy, as this supreme example testifies, knows no such law. The power of the Cross is greater to-day, more widely diffused, than in all the ages since it was first upreared.

The past, then, is not only something behind us. It is here within us, moulding our present. It might seem from this—and it is a view that has often been taken—that the past is for us a kind of fate; that it is our master, exercising a tyranny over us, involving us in an unescapable web of necessity. That is one of the mistakes we make when thinking of the past as dead. But it is not dead; it is alive, and because alive it is full of mobility. It changes as we change. It becomes plastic in our hands. How mutable it is becomes evident, for one thing, by the widely different shapes into which historians mould it. Compare, for instance, the view of the English Revolution and of Cromwell taken by Clarendon

The Life of the Soul

and that of Carlyle in his "Cromwell's Letters and Speeches." Yet they are reviewing the same period and the same facts.

But a more decisive evidence of this, and one that gets closer home to ourselves, is that which comes from the past in its relation to our personal life. It changes here, we say, as we change. As illustrations take two outstanding careers, those of St. Paul and Luther. The apostle had an education in rigid Pharisaism ; Luther one in ascetic Catholicism. These facts of their lives lay behind them—done, experienced, once for all, you may say, and not to be reversed. Of themselves these two pasts would have worked on, in the one case to a more fanatical Judaism, in the other to more and more of Romish servitude. They worked that way to a certain point. But in both personalities, at the given point, a mighty change was wrought in the soul. These men had their vision, their new revelation. And immediately with that inner change the past had changed. It assumed an entirely fresh aspect ; from it emerged new motives, new forces. Instead of a push in the road they had been travelling, it thrust them in a quite other direction. Every feature of the past became a reason for opposition, instead of for quiescence, a reason for hating where they had loved, for loving where they had hated. "All things have become new," and the old has at every point helped in the transformation.

The truth which stands out so vividly in these great careers is one that is common to us all. It is the essential truth of religion as an operative power ; the truth of sin, of repentance, of conversion. The past of the evil-doer is, in a sense, an irrevocable

The Living Past

past. His misdeeds may escape the justice of man ; they will never escape the justice of things. " Deeds are what they are, and their consequences will be what they will be." In a crime the man wronged comes off always better than the man who wrongs. We may indeed pity the criminal, for he is at war with the nature of things. To persist in wrong is to plunge downwards, a movement where all the past is a dead weight, which aids at every instant that netherward progress. But here, too, as the religious life is perpetually showing us, the miracle may come in—the miracle of an inner personal change, with the past as a chief assistant. A light from above strikes in, a spiritual power, which turns the past from being a chain that drags down into a goad which urges. The horror of remorse is the past in a new aspect. There is in that past as clear a conversion as in the soul of the repentant man himself. Its face is changed, its very heart is changed. It is now all an urgency, a quickening, a power unto salvation. The demon that dragged down has become an angel that beckons and that aids.

The view which we have here taken, and which, we venture to think, has shown itself to be well founded, gives us an outlook in various directions. It has shown us that the present is full of the past, is helpless, powerless without it. But it shows us also that the past looks also to the present as an indispensable ally—calls upon it, in fact, incessantly to do its share in the evolution of life. The past is never content with itself ; it demands always the something more. It is here that a mere conservatism, content with a repetition of bygone things, shows itself so hopelessly wrong. It is contrary to

The Life of the Soul

the whole scheme and movement of life. For it is only when the past is creating a new present that it fulfils itself. Nowhere is this more clearly visible than in the history of religion ; in its intellectual history, and in its spiritual history. The former offers us the deposit of old beliefs, as given in creeds and dogmatic systems. That they are futile as preservers intact of those old beliefs, futile however zealously people subscribe or recite them, is shown by the fact that modern men never take them in the sense in which they were written. They read into them other meanings—meanings dictated by the larger life that has since flowed in.

On the spiritual side of religion the truth is still more manifest. To keep here to the old, and the old only, is always a failure. Religion in each succeeding generation, to make an impression, must contribute its quota of new. The old is there to help it produce that. To reproduce instead only itself would be to contradict the law of life. Take, as a modern instance, the story of Methodism. Wesley's success lay in that, while full of the old, he superadded the new. To a lifeless orthodoxy, sunk in the apathy of its own forms, he brought the *élan* of a fresh spirit, a spirit that broke through convention, that defied the censures of the current respectability, that ran its hot metal into the channels that best suited it. Modern Methodism has reached a standstill because it has forgotten the lesson of its founder, forgotten in the very effort to follow him. It has kept on reproducing the past, forgetting that the past is there always to create something beyond itself. It keeps its old forms, whereas its leader's method was to break forms when better ones were to be had. It aims at

The Living Past

the decorum, at the convention which he despised. When it regains his initiative, his daring—when, like him, it takes *de l'audace, de l'audace et toujours de l'audace* for its motto, it will reproduce his victories.

We have throughout spoken here of the past as exhibiting an endless changefulness, an "eternal flux," as Heraclitus puts it. There is one aspect of it, however, where this law does not hold. We refer to the qualities of things. We see here a gleam as of eternity showing through. It is so in material objects. Through all the ages water goes on acting in the same way; wood continues to burn, granite to exhibit its stubborn hardness. We come to trust these qualities as faithful servants that never deceive us. And the same is true of actions. A deed of kindness, of unselfish sacrifice in the fifth century creates in us the same moral emotion as a similar one in the twentieth. The good is eternal. And as the ages progress, it is more and more evidently coming to its own. The evil by its nature is self-destructive. By its nature it means a loss of vitality, a failure to hold with life's upward movement. Its end seems to lie in a dislocation of itself, a return to the primal stuff out of which a fresh and better start will be made.

The past, as we have viewed it, shows us one of those invisibles out of which our life is made. We are through and through creatures of the invisible, which forms us, rules us, daily recreates us. We speak of it as dead, yet we see it to be alive. There is, indeed, no death. What we call by that name is another form of that endless activity in which our being is immersed—an activity which will take care that no element of us, whether body, soul, or spirit, shall ever be destroyed.

VI

OF DEAD PERFECTIONS

OUR readers, many of them at least, are doubtless familiar with De Quincey's delightful essay on the stage-coach, where he describes that British institution at the height of its glory. It is the time of the Peninsular War, when news of Wellington's victories over Napoleon's marshals kept the nation in a state of delirious enthusiasm. De Quincey pictures a ride from London to the North on a coach which bears with it the tidings of Talavera. The coach, ablaze with colours and decorations, with driver and guard in full uniform as bearers of his Majesty's mail, as it tears along the perfect roads, its superb team of bloods doing their twelve miles an hour, its passengers hurrying, its horn splitting the air with its joyous blast, is to all and sundry, peer and peasant alike, the one centre of interest. It carries the news which makes the heart of England throb ; it is the bond which unites city and country, the teeming metropolis and the remotest hamlet of the border. It is an institution of which the country is proud ; and it is something to be proud of. A long evolution had developed it, had developed the horse flesh in front of it, the coachman who handled the perfect team, the roads along which they thundered, the system of relays, the country inns, where man and beast found rest and refreshment.

Of Dead Perfections

In De Quincey's vivid page we have the description of a perfection, but of a perfection which is dead. Here is a glory that has vanished. What our fathers regarded as the high-water mark of locomotion represents to us almost the nearest approach to standing still. Imagine our news going at twelve miles an hour ! In half an hour a modern event has been flashed over the globe. Now we fly along our iron roads, and we are beginning to fly through the air. All this is a parable. For what has happened to the old coaching system is happening everywhere, in regions very far removed from coach driving. We are here, indeed, in the track of what seems a universal law, one whose operation we do well to study. We see systems, forms, methods and ideals of living evolving up to their acme, reaching their highest stage, and then, when at the height of their power and dominance, meeting their fate and passing away. Their fate ; what is it ? To meet that most formidable adversary of the good—something better. It is not evil that kills the good ; it is the more good, the better, the best. Is it not wonderful, all this, full of strange significance—to see myriads of our fellows, generation after generation, working within a given system of things, regarding it as the final ultimate system, regarding its perfection as the only possible one ; and then to see, arising out of the immeasurable unknown, a new something, inchoate, formless at first, but acquiring swiftly its own cohesion, symmetry and method ; which by and by invades, occupies, and finally expels from its ancient territory that old system which thought itself eternal ?

And note always that those dead things are so

The Life of the Soul

perfect of their kind. The old stage-coach in which De Quincey rode, with all that belonged to it, was, in its way, hardly surpassable. And so many other unsurpassable things have gone. There are extinct civilisations with arts whose secret we have lost. We read of a certain early Etruscan brooch representing three bees poised on a flower which could not be successfully copied by the foremost artists in Paris, in spite of repeated attempts. The Egyptians had a manufacture of colours which remain as brilliant as ever after four thousand years. Our aniline dyes would in that period have disappeared absolutely. Our winnings under the new system are always at the cost of something lost. The modern American has improved his continent out of all recognition as compared with what it was under the *régime* of the Indian tribes. Yet where would the New Yorker of to-day be by the side of a red man in tracking his way through a primeval forest, in telling the time by the sun, in tireless physical movement, in the endurance of hunger and thirst ?

In its invasion of an old system the new usually displays itself as all that is clumsy, awkward and repellent ; and for the reason that the old is perfect of its kind, while the new is a tyro, a beginner. Your champion walker as he strides along is the picture of grace, ease and power. Behold him as he takes his first lesson in riding, and you will have the reverse of that. And yet this lesson is a step forward. Contrast the wild beauty of the untamed wilderness with the first encroachment of civilisation in a frontier holding ; the majesty of the primitive forests, of the limitless prairie, of the mountain range, with the sheer ugliness of those burnt stumps,

Of Dead Perfections

of the squalid hut, of the ragged patch of vegetables ! Yet this also is a step upward. Along our every foot of advance we are treading on something beautiful that our progress kills. On our way to manhood we lose our childhood. Mothers lose their babes as much by their living as by their dying. The little socks, the toys, the photograph of that lovely four-year-old recall often to a tear-stained face the remembrance of a childish perfection, with which the lusty youth or man of affairs now bearing the name can hardly be identified. The child has died into the man.

A great deal of the world's pessimism arises from the fact that men refuse to accept the lesson of this ; arises from their always clinging to the decaying old as though there were nothing better or as good to follow ; from the belief that the perfection in which they have grown up is the only perfection ; that its destruction is " the end of all things." There have been men, both of the ancient and modern world, who have placed the value of living in the period of youth and early manhood, in the age of animal strength and passion. That, to them, is the perfect life ; and there is nothing to follow that is worth having. Says Anacreon, the poet of sensual loves, " When once the appointed time of youth is past it is better to die than to live." Mimnermus, called the eighth sage of Greece, in like manner put everything on youth and pleasure, and demanded as the extreme limit to die at sixty. And this note, so astonishing to some of us, has been re-echoed with painfullest iteration by the moderns. Benjamin Constant writes in his *Journal Intime*, " When the age of passion is over, what else can one

The Life of the Soul

desire except to escape from life with the least possible pain?" The elder Mill has an almost exactly similar sentiment. Chateaubriand spent a day of profound sadness. Asked the reason, he exclaimed "I am forty." Horace Walpole, when fifty, writing to Mme. du Deffand said: "Ah, my friend, after twenty-five what is the rest worth?" Are youth and pleasure, then, the only perfections of life? Contrast with these melancholy dirges the manly words of Lucilius, who, writing of his later years, says: "My soul is full of vigour and rejoices in having no longer much to do with the body. It leaps with joy, and holds with me all sorts of discourse on old age; it says that it is its flower." The Roman satirist, born before the dawn of Christianity, strikes here the essentially true note. He finds the merely passional vigour, so far from being the human ultimate, to be an inferior and passing form of our being; an introduction to life rather than life itself.

One might stay to elaborate that side of the theme, but there is another, and even deeper aspect of it, which calls for our attention. The problem of moral evil in our world, so long accepted by theology as a settled question, has been re-opened in startling fashion by later researches. Against the doctrine of man as a fallen being is now arrayed the doctrine of man as a being who has risen. Science asks us to think of man as originally a part of the animal kingdom. He descends from a race for whom the idea of sin did not exist. He was a perfect animal, just as a tiger is a perfect animal. A tiger is not troubled with theology. It is the perfection of strength, suppleness, animal grace, and of ferocity.

Of Dead Perfections

It is the *ne plus ultra* of a certain order of being. And its perfectness in that kind is not interfered with by any intruding thoughts from another sphere. If it has any sense of sin it does not show it. It slays its victim and drinks its blood with an enjoyment undiminished by any tenet of total depravity or of eternal punishment. How did man, beginning on a similar plane, come by his present inward condition? How did he come by his conscience, by his sense of guilt? Taking into our view all the facts, so far as they are known to us, the movement seems to have followed with perfect accuracy the law we have traced elsewhere, the law of dead perfections. It is the old story of the champion walker learning to ride; of the breaking in upon nature's wild beauty by the intrusion of civilisation. Man is not to be the perfect animal merely; he is to be something more, to learn a quite new set of lessons, and to fall into terrible confusions, into bewildering awkwardness and ugliness in doing so. He is the village artist who, because he has talent in him, is sent to study the classical masters, and there learns with shame and confusion of face, how his own faculty stands in presence of these great ones. His sense of sin is part of his move upward; it is the result of the dawning upon him of a higher ideal. John Bunyan, when plagued with this consciousness, wished he had been a dog. In his agony what a comfort to him would have been the thought that his spiritual turmoil showed how much more he was than a dog; how his sin-sense was a saving sense, a sign of his progress, of his rise in the scale of being?

Let it here be noted that science in thus profoundly modifying our doctrine of the Fall, in no wise takes

The Life of the Soul

it away ; in no degree diminishes its force. The "exceeding sinfulness of sin" remains what it was. But it gives us a new aspect of it, an aspect of hope in place of despair. Sin remains no longer an anomaly in the universe, a defeating of the divine purpose. In the vast scheme of life this phase of it has all been accounted for, and its limitations set. It is at most the failure, the blundering of the pupil in the first stages of a new discipline ; his ugly hut, his first miserable crop in that new territory of being which, in all its vastness of resources, is destined to become his own.

This doctrine of sin, as the early, inevitable stage of man's progress to a new perfection, has been attacked on two sides. The old school theologian, who ignores science ; who, in his devotion to the Church dogma, is blind and deaf to all that has been learned in these later years ; who, in the terms of that dogma, regards mankind in the main as a hopelessly doomed race, under the wrath and condemnation of God—will, of course, have nothing to say to it. It is almost amusing to turn from him to another opponent who, from a quite different quarter, assails it with an equal strength of language. Nietzsche, whose philosophy has had so singular an influence on modern Continental thinking, has no terms strong enough to indicate his detestation of that inward movement which has produced the modern soul. He calls it the "internalisation" of man, a movement in which what he regards as the primitive healthy animal instincts, instead of being, as at first, allowed their full action outwards, were turned in upon himself ; a movement by which he became a self-torturer, by which he produced in

Of Dead Perfections

himself that, to him, baneful phenomenon, "a bad conscience." He speaks of it as "this secret self-violation, this artist cruelty, this form of burning into oneself a will, a criticism, an opposition, a contempt, a 'No,' this dismal work of a voluntarily divided soul which because it delights to make suffer makes itself 'suffer.'" And his counsel is that we should reverse the action of evil conscience, and bring under its ban "all unnatural bents, all aspirations for another life, all that is hostile to the senses to the instincts, to nature, to animality; in a word, all the old ideals which are, each and every one, hostile to life and slandering the world."

We may set this teaching against that of the old dogma, to answer each other. They are equally contrary to facts as they are, as we know them to be. The Nietzsche doctrine is practically an advice to Bunyan to go back to his doghood; to the earlier settlers to leave nature to her wildness. It is to admit that the whole course of things in human development is a mistake and that our business is to reverse it. We are not prepared to admit, on even Nietzsche's word, that the universe is a mistake, its way of ordering things a blunder, which this philosopher should have been called in to correct. And we could not reverse it if we would. Nature never sounds a retreat. Her word is "forward." There is nothing that has come to man in his long history but is there of purpose, part of a plan for his inner advancement. His old animal perfection was broken in upon, broken up, to prepare for a new higher one, to the making of which all his ideals, all his struggles, all his failings, even are contributories. We

The Life of the Soul

pin our faith to the world's order, even though a German philosopher may impugn it.

But here we must stay our hand, and at a point where the theme becomes boundlessly suggestive. The prospects it opens are almost terrifying in their vastness. Our present systems, our present ideals, are they, too, on their way to the same limbo of dead perfections? Certainly we see on them all the touch of change. Who is to be the coming saint? Is he to be in the likeness of the past; the pale ascetic, nourished in the mediæval creed, fleeing this world as evil, despising his humanness as though it were opposed to divineness, scorning the present and exalting the future—as though this piece of eternity were less valuable than any other piece of eternity—is he to be *this* kind of man? That ideal is passing; a new one is already taking its place; a new human perfection in which holiness is construed as wholeness, which accepts the world as good, and this moment as good, and labours to make the best of both; which takes the whole man into consideration—his body for strength and beauty, his mind for widest knowledge, his soul for noblest emotions. That is a sample of what is coming in man's most intimate life. And there are other imminent breakings up of which here we cannot speak. Are we afraid of these changes? We need not be. For in the history of all that has as yet taken place we see one law at work. The broken perfection is not lost in being broken. As it dies it yields its essence, carrying its life into another and higher form. No good thing is lost. The good in your system, religious or other, will not be lost whatever may happen to its form. And the good

Of Dead Perfections

treasured in your soul will not be lost either. For ourselves and our systems are linked to a Purpose, a Love that does not change, to a Perfection which never dies.

Our little systems have their day ;
They have their day and cease to be ;
They are but broken lights of Thee,
And Thou, O Lord, art more than they.

VII

OUR PERSONAL FORTUNES

“ROMANCE,” says Lafcadio Hearn, “is not in novels, but in lives.” And certainly there is in every individual of us, the meanest and commonest, more wonderful “copy” than any journalist or novelist has yet put into print. We have great literatures, great in character painting, but no literature has yet explained a man, or any considerable part of him. Rousseau says of his “Confessions,” that “the book is a piece of comparison for the study of the human heart, and that it is the only one that exists.” It is certainly exceedingly frank and exceedingly nauseous. But Rousseau took a vast deal more explaining than his book offers us. Augustine, Bunyan, Amiel, Vauvenargues, have written copiously about themselves, but how far do their writings discover you and me? Nowadays people appear less interested than formerly in introspection. They seem to have taken the advice of Chamfort: “Let us do more and think less, and live without the study of living; *et ne pas se regarder vivre.*” The old-fashioned diaries have gone out of fashion. They seem reserved for Divorce Court cases. Too often our self-revealers reveal simply their egotism, their desire to draw attention to themselves. Hazlitt, scoffing at this self-advertisement, prefers the man who “sees enough in the universe to interest him without putting himself

Our Personal Fortunes

forward to try what he can do to fix the eyes of the universe upon him." Carlyle will have nothing to do with religious self-dissection—when it is done in public. Froude's "Nemesis of Faith" drew from him this savage rejoinder: "What is the use of a wretched mortal's vomiting up all his interior crudities, distractions, and agonising spiritual belly-aches into the view of the public, and howling, tragically. 'See!' Let him, in the Devil's name, pass them by the downward, or other method, and say nothing whatever."

It is, indeed, always a perilous business, and generally a bad one, to talk much about ourselves. But that need not hinder us, in a private and modest way, from feeling all the wonder of our lives, from—shall we say?—enjoying the romance of our personal fortunes. It ought not to make us conceited; quite the reverse. Our story, in one view—a view which we need to keep constantly before us—is the most insignificant of recitals. In this sense, we, all of us, the greatest of us, count for so very little. Kings even are small fry. There have been so many of them. Who of us at the moment could give the names of the French kings of the fourteenth century? What great persons they were while they were there! What a fuss over their baptism, their marriage, their coronation, their wars, their doings in general! And now nobody, except youths cramming for an examination, remembers their names! Could you mention any of the Under Secretaries of State in England half a century ago? What gods they were in their households and social circle when they were appointed! What is our present Prime Minister's reputation among the millions of China? The vast

The Life of the Soul

proportion of the existing human race has never heard of him. And, if so, what of the rest of us? Our little popularisings cover so small an area, and are soon forgotten. And most of us have no popularity at all. We are a speck in the immensity, one briefest gleam in the immeasurable eternities. Omar Khayyam puts our existence as

One moment in annihilation's waste,
One moment of the well of life to taste.

And that may pass as describing our external position, our standing in the visible world.

So much of our insignificance. But now what of our significance? It is here the romance, the marvel, comes in. You are here, and it took all the past eternity, all the forces of the universe, to produce you. If in all the past æons of primitive evolution, all the geologic ages, all the first beginnings of life, all the countless generations of animals, all the countless generations of men; if in all this movement one link had been missing, one action of the universe had failed in its stroke, you had not been here! You belong to the whole, are an integral part of the whole. The whole had not been the whole without you. You are constantly, in a hundred mysterious ways, passing into and reconstructing the whole. What travellers we are, in a way that perhaps has not occurred to many of us! Without leaving your home you are continually journeying. Your breath leaves your lungs, and forms by-and-by part of the atmosphere that is working upon Mont Blanc, or Everest. Your material form, as it daily disintegrates, enters into the life of mountains, of rivers, of rolling seas. While you are here you are everywhere.

Our Personal Fortunes

This sense of belonging to the whole is one of the deepest things in our personal fortunes. For it is true of our soul as well as of our body. Have you never felt, in looking from the top of a mountain over a vast prospect, a yearning to fly from peak to peak, to possess, to enter into the deepest reality and essence of all you see ? For you feel you have here only the shell of things ; the core of it all is beneath and beyond you. And that instinct, which is of the very essence of your nature, be sure means something. It is the sense of your soul's relation to the soul of things. It shows that the world belongs to us, the soul of it as well as the body, in a possession more real than we as yet know, but are yet to know.

There is another strange thing belonging to our personal fortunes. It is the fact that they are ours alone. We are full to-day of the idea of Socialism, of a complete and relentless sharing of things. Everything is to be divided up to everybody. Some enthusiasts talk of common homes and common tables. We have a vision of some black and greasy brother proposing to share our bed. Nature rather laughs at these ideas. Supposing all this programme were carried out, she would yet interpose her impassable barriers. The outsider may squeeze us as close as he likes ; he will never get into our interior being. We may have the widest circle of acquaintances, and life-relationships that are very dear and go very deep. But in our essential self we remain always alone. A score of friends may sympathise in your pain, but no one of them can feel it. The sensations which result from your varied experiences are for your special address, and are never delivered by mistake to your neighbour. Our companions share

The Life of the Soul

our joys and our sorrows in a way ; but they are never to them what they are to ourselves. We are born alone and we die alone. We are the great solitaries of the universe. The greater the crowd around us the keener is the sense of our aloneness. Does not this suggest that nature's way with us here is to compel us upon a spiritual relation ; that she has insulated our interior being so carefully in order that the current may flow without interruption between our soul and that Over Soul who is the spring of our energy, the Other of an eternal fellowship ?

The newspapers, in publishing accounts of wills, often speak of " the personalty," which is given in pounds sterling. We know, of course, the legal meaning of the term, as thus used. But it is a curious use of the word, characteristic of the age we are living in. A man's personality in the true sense is the person he is, the point he has reached in spiritual growth. And his personal fortunes will always be in exact proportion to that growth. For it is according to it that he will assign his own values to things, put his estimate on everything that happens to him. If he has reached no further than the point of merely wanting everything his own way, he will, whatever his material wealth, be continually disappointed. His will be the cry, probably without the humour of it :

Oh, darn the things that go and be,
Without consulting you and me.

But what an inner fortune he will be possessed of, if he has reached the point where he can say with old Epictetus, that God-possessed soul : " Do not look for things to happen as you wish ; on the contrary,

Our Personal Fortunes

wish for things to happen as they do. By this means shall your life achieve prosperity!" With your soul in this temper, what does it matter whether you live in a palace or a cottage? What matter it that your hands do this or that, scrubbing or polishing, if your mind is free, if your heart is harmonious with all that is? "This is a fine occupation for a count," said Duke Geoffrey of Lorraine to his brother Frederick, whom he found washing dishes in a monastery. "You are right, Duke," was the reply, "I ought to think myself honoured by the humblest service to the Master."

In our mammonised age the word fortune has become almost synonymous with a cash balance. When a man has "made his fortune" it means that he has accumulated so much in pounds sterling, in securities, or other property. We have, we suppose, the vocabulary we deserve. But in this universal cash business there is a point worth noting, which suggests applications. In all great business concerns, in banking, in limited liability companies, there is, in their stock-taking and balance-sheets, always an amount placed to reserve. The reserve fund, continually accumulating, represents the solidity of the concern; it is the insurance against emergencies, against sudden drains. In our personal fortunes, reckoned in the wider sense we are considering, there will also be an ever-accumulating reserve fund. The soul meets its outside affairs ever more easily because of this growing inner strength. It is a fund, for one thing, of knowledge. We discover the secrets of trouble, and the discovery disarms many of our fears. We find, for instance, that the strokes we have most dreaded do not fall.

The Life of the Soul

Those that do come are exactly what we did not look for. "I have had a great deal of trouble in my life," a dying man once said to his children, "and most of it never happened." Those of us who have lived long enough have proved the truth of the saying. We have learned also how generous life is in its apportionment of trouble. The crisis, the misadventure, the catastrophe, has been bad enough while it lasted. But have we forgotten the joy of relief when it was over? The peril, the *mauvais quart d'heure* we encountered years ago; how we have told it over and over again to ourselves and to our friends, and have so prodigiously enjoyed the telling! The remembrance that we are out of the bad affair that threatened to cloud our career has been since a life-long possession.

And the soul's reserve fund, lying there at the centre of us, a fund of faith, of innermost spiritual good, renders us more and more immune to the outside assault. We are wronged or insulted by another? We feel, with Bernard, that none can really injure us except ourselves. The wrong falls back on the wronger; it is so much more his affair than ours. Have you not found, in the midst of outwardly uncomfortable circumstances, often to your glad surprise, an inner elation of spirit, which makes you say, with Marie Bashkirtseff, "My body weeps and sighs, but my soul inwardly rejoices"? One thinks here of John Woolman, that beautiful Quaker soul, who, on a mission to the Indians, alone in the forest at night, with rain falling heavily, with no fire, sat at the trunk of a tree, and occupied himself with "a sweet meditation on the love of God."

Our Personal Fortunes

We are here in this world to learn its lesson, to do our bit of work in it, to contribute our quota to the life of the whole. We shall not have learned its lesson or have done our work properly unless we have found out how to lose ourselves joyously in that universal life ; lose ourselves in its highest ideals, in its final ends. One of the worst chapters in human history is that which records how men, in the world, in the Church, have allowed their petty ambitions, the quest of their personal fortunes, to betray the interests of truth, of liberty, of the world's good. Let us care supremely for the great things, the greatest things, and God will take care of us.

VIII

THE PRESSURE OF LIFE

As we walk through the fields in the springtime we are conscious of many things ; most of them joyful things. The blue of the sky, flecked with light, passing clouds, the bright sunshine, the new vernal breath, the sense that the grim forces of winter, his cold and darkness and death, are rolling away defeated—all this forms an intoxicating consciousness. But behind the scene there is another thing, perhaps the most potent of all. It is the sense of an immense pressure, that is everywhere being exerted. Within the trees, within the flowers, within the dull earth itself, we see an imprisoned force that is bursting to express itself. It is the pressure of an unseen life, life that labours to put itself into form, to show its infinite potencies. It is behind the whole vegetable world, lifting, pushing, expanding, with a million-ton energy. It is in the sap that runs in the trees, and bursts there into leaf and flower ; in the hedgerows where by and by will “ break the white foam of the spring ” : in the growing corn shoots ; in the heart of man, which it fills with a tumult of hopes and desires.

In that sphere of things the pressure is a wholly joyous one. We say : “ If this is life, then life must be a good thing ; its reawakening is the coming of beauty, of gladness, of all that is good.” To say that

The Pressure of Life

nature once more lives is to say that nature enjoys, and calls us to enjoy. Has it ever occurred to us to ask whether the pressure that exhibits itself so blithely in the springtime is, in its essence, the same thing as that other pressure which we feel to-day in our social state, in our civilisation, in the soul of every man and woman of us? It has certainly in that sphere a different way of showing itself. Human life, especially in its modern phase, is every hour and day under a tremendous driving power. One would have thought that the advent of machinery, the pressing of the nature-forces into the service of man, would have lessened the strenuousness of life. Instead it has increased it. We are in a day when a single machine will do the work of fifty men. And yet the man behind the machine is more anxious than ever; the lines are cut deeper on his features. "Merrie England," to come to our own country, is not nearly as "merrie" as in Chaucer's day. We lack entirely the careless gladness of the "Canterbury Tales." Our riches have increased enormously, but our peasants, our artisans, are poorer than they were then. And they feel their poverty more. Their sense of it is heightened immeasurably by the wealth that flaunts itself before them. The man behind the loom, in the coal mine, on the engine footplate, broods and broods as he works. The pressure upon him expresses itself just now in hostile labour combinations, in strikes, in revolutionary movements.

But his efforts here do not seem to lighten his burden. In some ways they add to it. His strike is a sword without a handle. As he grasps it, its sharpness cuts first and deepest into his own flesh.

The Life of the Soul

The capitalist is hit by it in a way, but he will not eat one meal the less ; and his household fire will not burn the less brightly. The striker has hardly scratched the skin of his adversary, but his weapon has drawn the red blood of himself, his wife and his children. His successes, whatever they are, are won against tremendous odds, and with heaviest sacrifices.

But the workman—is he the only one on whom life presses heavily to-day ? He thinks so, but there he is wrong, prodigiously wrong. We have had acquaintance with men who in their career have known all there is to know of artisan life and of capitalist life, who have risen from the handling of tools to the handling of great riches. One occurs vividly to our mind at this time who, in a frank talk, told how he enjoyed the savour of existence far more as a young carpenter than in any after-period of an exceptionally prosperous career. His later wealth had added immensely to the pressure of life. The development of interests had multiplied the burdens. The modern capitalist carries a world on his shoulders. He cannot eat more or sleep more than of old ; probably less ; he can rush about in trains or in his motor, but what sort of a mind does he carry in his journeys ? All his enterprises, all his investments, are so many points of attack. A revolution in China, unrest in Mexico, a threatened bankruptcy in Japan, are to him not merely political news. They are *his* affairs, they touch his stake in the world.

And, as a human being, the more highly developed he is the more do the common fates, in which he shares, press upon him. If he is possessed of keen

The Pressure of Life

sensibilities, the more impossible he finds it to be happy while others are unhappy. His own prosperity gives him additional pangs in view of the vast adversities around him. In the recent coal strike how many of us were unable to eat our dinner or to enjoy our fire with the thought upon us of fireless homes, of children going without bread ! And our capitalist, as, with the rest of us, he progresses from youth to old age, finds each stage to bring its own especial pressure, and the later ones grow in their heaviness. In the earlier days the force behind is all in the direction of growth, of action, of full expression of oneself. In the later it is more and more the pressure of the void, of an appalling emptiness. The hard-pressed toiler looks with envy at the unoccupied classes, at the "idle rich," as possessing a freedom denied to himself. Here, he thinks, amongst these privileged, is a perpetual holiday for body and mind. It is the greatest of delusions. It is precisely to the unoccupied that life's pressure assumes its most imperious and menacing forms. That void of vivid interests is, to our strangely compacted soul, the heaviest of all burdens. It is then that the most insistent questions force themselves. It is in such times we ask : "What is the meaning of life ? What are we getting out of it ? To what end am I sleeping and waking, thinking, hoping, fearing ?"

Your man of leisure is the least furnished, the least protected, against the strokes of human fate. Advancing age is the time of bereavements, when the loved things, the loved persons, pass away. The vacancy hurls itself upon us as an overwhelming, an intolerable force. The house with its furniture,

The Life of the Soul

every brick in it, every feature of it, has been associated for us with a loved form that was the life of it all. The loved one goes, and these outward things seem all to have died with it. They, too, are dead now, and look at us as corpses of their former selves. The place which was once a home has become a tomb. And all the riches of the world are powerless to touch one pang of the deadly grief, to ease one pain of the broken heart. Plainly there is no escape for us, whatever our station in life, no escape for the king on his throne or the beggar on the wayside, from the insistent, often maddening, pressure of life.

It is time now to ask, What is the meaning of this pressure? Is it some evil fate that is upon us? Are we pursued here by a Nemesis whose business it is to wreak punishment upon us? Or can we see in all this another and a better purpose? May we not come back there to the scene we sketched at the beginning, to the panorama of springtime, and ask whether on this question there may not be here some suggestions for us? Is there, we may well inquire, any radical difference between nature's process in the outside world and her process in man himself? Is the pressure which, in the one case, is so evidently beneficent, maleficent in the other? Who can believe it? There are in nature's world abundant oppositions, apparent contradictions. But they are apparent rather than real. Beneath them all, if we look deep enough, we see her underlying unities. And in the conditions we are studying here we find no exception to that law. Her pressure on the soul is the same, in method and end, as her pressure on the tree. Her purpose is to get out of the soul, as out of

The Pressure of Life

the tree, all there is in it. We are not to be content with what we are ; to rest there ; because we are not to remain where or what we are. We are creatures in the making, and nature's driving process is a making, a re-making process. When she fills us, and more when she empties us, it is to the one end. We do not understand her process because we do not understand her end. The one working faith for us is that the end is there, and that it is something greater than we know.

Man is forced along his pathway. His great things are produced in spite of himself. It is when men and nations are pressed "beyond measure, so that they despair even of life," that they make history. It was in the Indian Mutiny that ordinary Englishmen, the men and their captains, showed themselves heroes and demi-gods. It was in the eighteenth century, when Britain's fortunes were at the lowest ebb, when her glory seemed fatally dimmed, when the world seemed passing her by, that under Pitt she awoke and rallied ; conquered India, conquered Canada, penetrated South Africa, founded a world-wide Colonial Empire. It was under Elizabeth, when her poor five million inhabitants were menaced with infinite perils, when her very existence, conspired against by the Catholic Powers, was at stake, that she stretched herself to her full height, that her sailors smote Spain, wrested from her the dominion of the seas, while her poets burst into music that still fills the world. It was when Judaism lay expiring, as it seemed, under the heel of Rome, that it produced Jesus, and gave the world a new, immortal religion. And the rule with nations is the rule with ourselves. Whoever has done anything

The Life of the Soul

has done it, not by himself, but by the force behind. "The man who goes furthest," said Cromwell, who spoke from experience, "is the man who does not know where he is going." The one thing he knows is that he is being pushed along, and by a power outside himself.

Upon every mother's son of us ; upon the worker and the idler ; upon the rich and the poor ; upon the good and the bad, life presses with its urgent, insistent force. That pressure is felt in our fullest, completest movements ; is felt even more formidably in our vacant hours. Some of these pressures, be it here said, are of human contrivance, needless, harsh, unjust, and will have to be removed. But we shall never remove life's pressure ; and the supreme fact about it, which we need above all else to carry in our mind, is that it is a good and not an evil thing. It is the Spring in us, the power of our growth, the sign of our greater destiny. We are burden-carriers, as ships are ; and to be heavily freighted is always better than to go in ballast. The weight of our load is the assurance of our value.

IX

OF SPECIAL PROVIDENCE

“UNLESS the hairs of your head are all numbered there is no God.” The words are George Macdonald’s, and they put the challenge of faith in its clearest and boldest form. We all want to believe that our hairs are numbered ; that we are the objects of a special loving care. We feel with Michelet : “Let the sentiment of the loving Cause disappear, and it is over with me. If I have no longer the happiness of feeling this world to be loved, of feeling myself to be loved, I can no longer live. Hide me in the tomb.” But the wish, we are told, is not evidence. Is not the evidence rather the other way ? Our age has become penetrated with a sense of the utter indifference of nature to our personal fortunes.

The heavens above make no disclosure ;
The earth keeps up its terrible composure.

It is said the earthquake at Lisbon made multitudes of people atheists. Do we wonder ? The world order is no respecter of persons. In a shipwreck the sea will drown the saint as composedly as the escaped murderer. We rebel against a system of things which has permitted ages of slavery, of brutal penal laws ; which allows a civilisation where, at our own doors, people are herded in homes of one room, where children die for want of food, where men kill themselves because life is

The Life of the Soul

too much for them. Why, it is asked, if God is omnipotent and loving, do men and women drag themselves about in weakness and disease, when He could so easily have made them strong and healthy? Could not the power which made the everlasting mountains, which gave the sea its resistless might, have put some of this wasted energy into our suffering frames? That would have made all the difference! The present writer's correspondence is full of this questioning. It takes sometimes curious forms. Says one inquirer: "If I am robbed of money, you may say perhaps that the loss is meant for my moral discipline. But where does God's will come in on the side of the robber? Is he carrying out God's will? Again, when a child is born as the result of a man's and woman's sin, is the child's soul, brought this way into existence, an affair of God's will? Or is it a soul without God?" Truly, if faith is to exist at all, it will be as a hardy plant. It has to weather some rude shocks, some baffling queries.

And yet it does exist. That is the first thing to be said. It exists and has existed in all ages of the world. Lactantius, the early Christian apologist, was not far out in his bold statement that belief in Providence was the common property of all religions, and was firmly established before all revelation. And the significance of this fact is not diminished by the circumstance that the reasons for this faith were often so grotesque and, to our mind, so ludicrous. An instinct may not the less be a true instinct for the false accounts of it given by its possessors. A man may walk long before he can find a proper statement of the physiology of movement.

In Christendom for long ages the idea of a special

Of Special Providence

Providence was sustained by accounts of miraculous occurrences. The sign of God's care over human lives was in His surpassing or contradicting the known laws of nature. The fifty odd volumes of the Bollandist collection of the "Acta Sanctorum" are stuffed with wonders of this sort. As we read them we are tempted to exclaim, with Meredith, in his "Shaving of Shagpat"—

Oh, world diseased ! Oh, race empirical,
Where fools are the fathers of every miracle !

The world's majestic order was not good enough for these enthusiasts. To demonstrate God's power in life they must make Him a law breaker. Not less singular is the way in which, in Church annals, a special Providence is seen in the triumph of one's own party or faction. The sudden death of Arius on his triumphal entry into Constantinople is held by Catholic writers, Newman included, as a divine intervention in the cause of orthodoxy. When Louis XIV. signed the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, by which he expelled the most stable and truly religious element of his subjects, we have his minister, Michel le Tellier, exclaiming : " My God, I thank Thee that mine eyes have seen the salvation of Thy people ! " A successful battle, no matter in what infamous cause it has been won, has invariably been followed by ecclesiastical Te Deums. The faith in Providence as a sort of special relief agent, to be called on at all hours of day and night, was perhaps never more naïvely expressed than in the story of an old negro, who, during an earthquake at Charleston, prayed as follows : " Good Lord, come and help us ; oh, come now. And come Yo'self, Lord ; 'taint no time for boys ! " Our suppliant

The Life of the Soul

believed in help at first hand. He had a healthy distrust of intermediaries.

Views of this kind still hold their ground over a very wide area, but to most intelligent people they are no longer satisfactory ones. If there were nothing else we should be left without a doctrine of Providence. We have not mentioned the theory of pluralism, so ingeniously developed by the late Professor James; nor that of dualism—of an Ormuzd and Ahriman, two opposing powers or personalities, of good and evil, that under these and other names, both in Christendom and outside it, have been used to explain the seeming confusion of things in our world. Certainly there is no *a priori* reason against the idea of a clash of wills as possible behind the scenes. Enmities and malignities are a too familiar phenomenon amongst ourselves. They are a part of the spiritual world, as that world exists in the community of human souls; and who shall say why they may not exist in a spiritual world beyond, and yet in touch with our own? The weirdest theory we have met with as explanation of the supposed cosmic disorder is that of the Piedmontese pessimist whom Benjamin Constant encountered, who held that the world was made by a God, but a God who had died! His intentions were excellent, but He passed before His work was finished, and so left everything as confused as we see it! A cheerful view, truly, and which may be said to have the merit of originality but which does not otherwise appeal to us.

It is time, however, we faced the problem for ourselves. In doing so let us come back to our first proposition. The faith in a special Providence exists, it exists in spite of calamities, of nature's indifference

Of Special Providence

and apparent cruelty, in spite of all adverse theories. Why, we ask, does it exist? It is there, we answer, and will always be there, because it dwells in a region beyond and above Nature. The spirit of man has its own realm. When it turns in upon itself; when it seeks its centre; when it speaks to its kin; it knows instinctively that the highest in itself has a source; that the goodness within it derives from a higher Goodness; that its imperfect love represents a perfect love to which it is united. And this spiritual assurance is not displaced by any outward happening. Rather it feeds upon such happenings. Is it not worth considering that faith in special Providence instead of being killed by calamity, has actually been built on calamity? It is when the external presses at its hardest that the soul gets its clearest and intensest self-consciousness; it is then it retreats to its citadel. As to nature's indifference, her cruelty, was she ever more indifferent, more cruel than when the Man of Nazareth hung upon the Cross? The old Gnostics maintained that Jesus did not suffer, it was only an appearance. We know better. Not an ounce of Nature's penalty was remitted, not a jot or tittle broken of her inevitable law. The slow torture of the agonised body, its weight hung upon the cruel nails, was felt to the full. And yet it was there, in the career that ended so, that the mightiest faith the world has known, the faith in God as the Father of Eternal Love, was born. And ever since the times of suffering have been the times of faith. Scotland to-day is an orthodox country. Its comfortable burghers have a very respectable sense of religion. But will anyone say that its religious faith is comparable in its intensity with that of the men of

The Life of the Soul

the Moss-hags, who sheltered their starved and storm-beaten bodies in dens and caves from the fury of the oppressor ?

When you talk of the relentless laws of Nature, you must talk also of the spirit of man, in its relation to them. An earthquake, you say, shows the indifference of the world-order to our personal fortunes. The present writer had a letter from an English settler in South America, whose house had been thrown down and his prospects ruined by an earthquake. He and his family had spent the night on which he wrote unprotected on the hillside. And he wrote to say that never in his life had he experienced such a sense of the presence of God, and of confidence in Him, as in those dread hours. At such times men have dealings not only with nature's laws, but with something beyond them. In our pessimistic speculations our mistake is in constantly looking to the outside and neglecting the inside. It is the men who have fronted privation and danger and death, who have least to say about Nature's cruelty. They have not found her cruel. Dr. Taylor, the Marian martyr, when he was told he had reached the place where he must suffer, said : " Thank God I am even at home." He did not think of death at the stake as a mere cruelty. It is not the desperate situations that promote pessimism. That is the result rather of luxury and overfeeding. When Whymper, the great climber, was tumbling down a precipice of the Matterhorn, expecting every moment to be his last, he describes his sensations. He felt no pain, and no disquietude ; he had rather a sort of amused curiosity as to which bump would finish his business ! And many a climber in similar situations—we can count

Of Special Providence

ourselves in the number—can testify to the same feeling.

The faith in a special Providence which is possible to our time, and to all times, is then a faith which resides in the spiritual realm, which springs out of our spiritual instincts and affinities ; which works in a sphere that transcends Nature, which accepts her laws, even in their hardest expressions, as ministering to its development. We say this in face of all the objections. Let us come to them—to the things we said at the beginning. Why, with a good and omnipotent God, is not our world more perfect ; why weakness and disease, when with such powers abroad in the universe there might have been strength and health ? Why has a state of society been permitted in which the rich rob the poor ; in which the hardest work is done for the worst pittance ; in which we have homes of one room ? That is to say, supposing God had done everything for us ! Would that have been a better condition than the one in which we find ourselves ; one in which we are invited to find out things, and to do things for ourselves ? A paradise with nothing to do might be a paradise for somebody else to admire ; it would be no place for a working soul to find itself in. We are reminded here of the saying of Geothe : “ It would have been for Him (God) a poor occupation to compose this heavy world out of simple elements, and to keep it rolling in the sunbeams from year to year, if He had not the plan of founding a nursery for a world of spirits upon this material basis.”

The whole scheme, indeed, so far as it opens to us, is one whose primal object—for which all else is risked and even sacrificed—is a scheme for the

The Life of the Soul

development of human spirits, and that by leaving for man to do all that he can do. He is not to be coddled—to be furnished with crutches when he can use his own muscles and limbs. The school-boy who finds a companion to do all his sums for him may regard his helper as a special providence. But he is not a good providence. Why should man be cured by miracle of his diseases? Let him learn to cure himself. That will give him not only health, but the laws of health—so much larger a possession. His difficulties, his miseries—what are they but a perpetual challenge to try again? People are plagued here by droughts, there by deluges. They pray for better weather, and get no answer to their prayers. But *is* there no answer? Is not heaven's silence here a quiet challenge to man to undertake his weather? We are beginning to conquer the air by flying in it. But is there not another, a larger conquest, yet to be attempted? Are we not in sight of a time when man, helpless hitherto under his storms and heats, shall turn the energies of his intellect to these seeming intractable elements and subdue them to his sway? However that may be, this, at any rate, becomes increasingly clear to us—that every human weakness, every social disorganisation, every hindrance to our perfecting, lies there before us: not as evidence of heaven's indifference, but as heaven's challenge to our own effort. We are to work out our own salvation, the only salvation that can be of any value to us.

It is on this line of things that we find the answer to questions such as those in the correspondence we mentioned in the beginning. Where is the special Providence, the will of God, in the action of the

Of Special Providence

robber who despoils us, in the bringing into the world of an illegitimate child as the result of lust? That is no new question. We may equally think, "Where was the will of God in the Sanhedrin that condemned Jesus, or the soldiers who buffeted and crucified Him?" And it is answered in the same way. Be sure there was a will—the will that put a soul of good into things evil; the will that left man free to do to his worst as well as his best; to find himself by pursuing wrong roads to the very end, and discovering what was to be met with there. The human freedom, with all the risk of using it wrongly, is better than no freedom. The soul can grow under no other conditions. Man must put out to sea, even with the chance of wreckage, for he will never become a sailor by remaining in port. And our faith goes so far as to believe that in this human voyage even his wreckage will not ruin him. For man's worst has its limitations, and contains in itself some subtle seed of recovery. As that excellent Christian Father, Methodius, has it, "For I say that man was made, not for destruction, but for better things." The scheme we are under is a moral one; a scheme under which the thief will pay for his thievery, and the lustful man for his lawlessness of passion. But it is one also which recognises in the criminal more than his criminality. If he is under a law which exacts its penalty, he is under a grace which is higher than law, which uses law as the instrument of its purpose of blessing.

Yes, the hairs of our head are all numbered. Whenever we pray we affirm that. And we can match this affirmation, in our being's highest act, against all the materialisms and all the devil's advocacies, from whatever quarter they come. For

The Life of the Soul

the soul here is sure of itself. It moves here in a sphere the world cannot enter, still less conquer. *Quis separabit?* In face of life's sternest tragedies, of its utmost extremities, it joins in the Apostle's triumphant hymn of faith, knowing with him that neither life nor death, things present nor things to come, can shut it off from the Infinite Love.

X

PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION

PSYCHOLOGY, in some respects at least, may be described as almost a new science. It has framed for itself a vocabulary which was unknown to the ancients. Telepathy, mediumship, the subliminal consciousness, the double or multiple personality, the trance phenomena, are terms and phrases which we have had to invent in order to set forth facts and conclusions which are the harvest of modern investigation. The word psychology is, of course, an old one. It means, literally, "the doctrine of the soul"; and there have been doctrines of the soul since man found he had a soul. If anyone wants to know what the earlier theorists have done in this direction, let him read Augustine's "De Anima," where he will find an amazing collection of the views of the early world. Aristotle and Plato, the Christian fathers, the Middle Age schoolmen, the mystics, the latter philosophies, orthodox and unorthodox, with an infinite variety of interpretation, have had this as their common theme. And no man can be called an authority on this subject who has not, with his other qualifications, a fairly comprehensive knowledge of that vast literature. Yet we repeat, the science, in some of its aspects, is to-day a new one. The phenomena of the mind are being studied with new instruments, and under new canons of research.

The Life of the Soul

The psychological schools of Nancy and of Paris ; the experiments of Charcot and Maxwell ; the investigations of Myers, of Lodge, and of William James—to mention a few of the myriad workers in this field—workers who have put the human consciousness under a microscope, who have followed its normal and its abnormal manifestations with the trained eye of the scientist, have given to our knowledge a fresh start which promises immense results.

The influence which these later researches is likely to have upon religion is already being shown in more than one direction. It has produced new arguments for personal survival of death. “ When I can see without eyes, and hear without ears, and understand without a brain,” says Diderot in a famous passage, “ I shall be more disposed than I now am to believe in my existence after my eyes and ears and brain have been destroyed by death.” His belief would have been somewhat disturbed by the experiments of his fellow-countryman, Charcot, who has exhibited persons, under trance conditions, as actually performing these impossibles ; reading print applied to their knee, or the sole of their foot ; or in telepathy beholding scenes and events far beyond the reach of bodily vision. And apart from such experiments Diderot might well have asked himself whether the marks of a higher intelligence everywhere manifest in the universe depended on the action of some colossal brain like our own, ensconced at the centre of things ! We have only to state the proposition to feel its absurdity. But this verdict carries with it the farther one, that spirit, consciousness, intelligence, in their highest degree, are independent of brain, of this or that material

Psychology and Religion

combination ; not the slaves, but the masters of them, using them for this or that form of manifestation, according to their height of being. In another direction we have the evidence which Lodge, Myers, and others have offered the world as to supposed communications from deceased persons, affirming their continued conscious existence. That evidence is still *sub judice*, and upon it we express here no further opinion than this—that evidence which has proved convincing to minds of the finest scientific quality and training is bound to have its weight in the decision of the highest of all problems. In this category of the contributions of the new psychology to religion we cannot omit to mention the ingenious argument which Dr. Sanday has developed from the phenomena of the subliminal mind as a new factor in the doctrine of the Person of Christ. That it is, to our thinking, not a convincing argument, does not detract from its value as suggestion ; as opening up the vast possibilities of modern research in the recasting of current theology.

While paying this debt of recognition to the new facts and theories, it is not, however, with these that we propose here chiefly to concern ourselves. We come back again to that original definition of psychology, as “the doctrine of the soul.” The soul in its natural, normal action ; as it has been known to act and feel ever since we have had any record of it ; let us, from our modern point of view, and in the midst of our present-day controversies, come back upon that for its verdict. Religion is supposed to be an affair of the soul. Has the soul itself any clear affirmation about it ? We would say here with Tertullian : “I address thee, O soul,

The Life of the Soul

simple and rude, uncultured and untaught, such as they have thee who have thee only ; that very thing pure and entire, of the road, of the street, of the workshop. I want thy experience. I demand of thee the things thou hast brought with thee into man, which thou knowest either from thyself, or from thy author, whoever he may be." Let us inquire whether in its primitive emotions, in its instinctive attitude to the universe, in its response to events, in its qualities and capacities, it has any solid testimony to offer ; and, if so, to what sort of reality it points.

Has it ever occurred to us to analyse the impressions which the universe makes upon us ? Have we inquired as to why it is that, in contemplation of its scenes, and of the events that occur in it, such and such feelings arise in our minds ? Why is it that as we gaze upon the sea, on the great mountains, on the blue heavens, on the peering stars, there comes upon us the sense of the awful, the sublime ; that there arises the instinct of adoration ? Why, when we look on a flower in the hedgerow, or in our garden, do we speak of them as beautiful ; how is it they create in us the idea of a perfect beauty, beyond even that which their own outlines suggest ? How is it that events as they occur produce in us the idea of a cause, and lead us to the belief that all things have a cause ? Why is it that actions in our neighbours and in ourselves affect us so strangely by their moral quality ; why do we describe them as low, base, mean ; or as noble, pure or holy ? Is there a reason in themselves for all this ? We can conceive of beings on whom they would have no such effects. We have near neighbours in the animal world who are not at all responsive in this way. There are cattle grazing in

Psychology and Religion

the Alpine pastures to whom Mont Blanc suggests nothing in particular. Your dog may sniff the rose, but has he a theory of the beautiful? There seems only one way of accounting for these effects in us, and that is by referring them to the constitution of the soul itself. We feel like this because we are made like this.

Take the effect of music upon us. When you listen to Bach's Passion music, or to Handel's Largo, or to some simple hymn of your childhood, what is your theory of the impression they produce? You can go into the science of the thing. There is a background here of figures, of mathematics. There are estimates of the number of atmospheric vibrations belonging to each note in the scale and of the combination of these numbers in harmony, in counterpoint. There are questions of the vibratory quality of different instruments, of their timbre. There are further questions of the structure of the ear, of the tympanum, the auditory nerve. But all this has brought you no nearer. All this fails utterly to explain why this strain stirs to martial ardour, why that drowns you in sadness, why another lifts you to the heights of religious rapture. Are you not pointed here to an inner spiritual structure, answering to some unseen reality without, to a soul of music in the universe; to a spiritual Reality which holds all you feel and to which your feeling is the echo, the response?

It is the same with events. Search all the histories, all the literatures. The accounts of the world's happenings there, in different ages and countries, are marvellously diverse. Lafcadio Hearn says the Oriental thinks naturally to the left when we think

The Life of the Soul

to the right. "The more you cultivate him the more strongly will he think in the opposite direction to you." But there is one thing in which East and West, North and South agree, and that is in giving a religious aspect to events. They agree with Thales in principle, if not in expression, when he says, "All things are full of Gods." And the notable point here is that the more tragic the event, the more sinister the external aspect of things, the more intense has been the activity of the religious consciousness. Who, antecedently, would have imagined that a common execution, a crucifixion, could have become the central fact of a world-religion? How explain it except on the admission that it fitted in with the make of the human soul? Is not that suggestion in "Wilhelm Meister" true to the fact of things, where we read of a broken crucifix? "I cannot help recognising in this crucifix the fortunes of the Christian religion, which, often enough dismembered and scattered abroad, will ever in the end gather itself together at the foot of the Cross."

The soul's response to the universe, to its character and its events, may be described as an echo. Now, an echo follows certain laws. There are surfaces which produce no perceptible echo. Where one is heard at all it will be in accord first with the character and volume of the sound which strikes upon the resounding surface, and, second, with the quality and conformation of that surface. Had human nature, which is the surface here in question, been other than it is, the outside world, in its impact upon it, would have produced a correspondingly different effect. The actual soul's echo, as we know it, is the

Psychology and Religion

testimony to its essential structure. Upon this quivering compound of thought and feeling the cosmos has, through the ages, struck its varying note ; struck its note of joy and sorrow, of triumph and defeat ; its gentler touch of love, friendship, peace, happiness ; its harsher strokes of pain and hardship, decay and death. What has been the response ? The wonderful thing here, as we have said, is the soul's reply to the world's hardness ; that, instead of a result of pessimism and revolt, there has been in all races and times a response, more or less articulate, of faith, trust, resignation, prayer, the full play of the religious consciousness. Take the most staggering of all facts, that of death. To the eye it is the end of all things. A corpse seems the mockery of human aspiration. What is the use of noble purpose, of high striving if this is the outcome ; this decaying body, without sense or sight, or thought, or feeling, fit only to be buried out of sight ? Yet before this seeming final humiliation the soul refuses to be dismayed. Instead it has constructed its religion out of it. Even where it has placed the lowest estimate on the future its note has been of lofty courage. " Death," said a great Stoic moralist, " is the only evil that can never touch us. When we are, death is not. When death comes we are not." Cicero finds in death nothing to fear, everything to hope. " Death," says he, " is an event either utterly to be disregarded if it extinguish the soul's existence, or much to be wished if it convey her to some region where she shall continue to exist for ever. One of these two consequences must necessarily follow the disunion of soul and body. . . What then have I

The Life of the Soul

to fear if, after death, I shall either not be miserable or shall certainly be happy ? ” In the oldest known civilisations of the world, in Babylon and Egypt, we find the mind of man full of a future life, of which the present is the preparation and the portal. Christianity in its still more confident affirmation is introducing here no foreign element. It is resting on the inner structure of the soul ; putting into articulate language the echo of man’s nature, to the nature of things in which it stands.

We say, then, that the testimony of the soul is a religious testimony ; that its response to the universe, as we find it in the sense of awe, of adoration, before nature’s sublimity ; in the emotions called up by great music ; in its feeling for beauty, in its attitude before events, is a response which substantiates the broad truths which we speak of as religious. There arises here immediately the question as to the kind of religion to which it testifies. That is an interminable subject on which we cannot now attempt to enter. But there is one feature of it on which a word may be said. Whatever form religion may take the foundation of it, where it is sincere, is faith. And what is faith ? We have had so many definitions of it ; so many authoritative declarations concerning it, that one might well regard it as a *res judicata*, an affair about which there is no further question. As a matter of fact, our time is pressing in need of its own affirmation. Is faith a yielding to authority ? Is it the acceptance of a scheme of belief offered us by past ages ? Are we to believe something because somebody, a pope or a council, or a doctrinal article, declares we shall be damned if we do not ? It is here that psychology

Psychology and Religion

comes in to the help of religion. It is here that the soul pronounces its own verdict, a verdict proceeding from its own nature. Listen, as against all external pretensions, however august, to the voice of your own soul, and it will give you an answer. It will tell you that there is no faith, in any genuine sense of the term, which does not arise from its own free and unfettered action. There may be yielding ; there may be submission ; there may be a sort of acceptance. But let these terms stand for what they are worth. They are worth something here in our world ; their exact value is doubtless fully appraised in another world. But be sure of this : they are not faith. That word only belongs to an action of the soul, where, in the consciousness of its own freedom, it makes a truth, a fact, aye, a person, its own by the deliberate acceptance of mind and heart. Luther, in his great reforming years, saw this clearly. Later he went back somewhat from it, and after years have seen a long succession of dismal departures. But consider this great word of his : " Therefore it is vain and impossible to compel by force this belief or that belief. Force does not do it. It is a free work in faith to which no one can be forced."

True religion, then, must rest on a true psychology. Deeper than all churches, all priests, all Bibles, even, is the spiritual nature of man. A faith which accords with that nature, which is its direct and genuine utterance, can never die out. It is the voice of the soul, and will last as long as the soul endures.

XI

IS CHRISTIANITY PASSING ?

WE find growing numbers of people to-day asking this question ; putting it to themselves if not to others. A Roman Catholic lady in a letter to us says, " Christianity is passing. Our own leaders realise this, and I have often heard good Catholics say that Christians may yet find themselves in the position they were in in the third century, a sort of moral oasis in the desert of the new Paganism." Leading Catholics, we may note, have been saying this for some time past. As far back as 1870 we have Cardinal Guibert writing of France : " We Christians form a society, a people apart, which, no longer being in community of ideas with the immense society which surrounds us, is becoming disintegrated, and is, in fact, in full process of dissolution." At a later date, in 1902, M. Bourrier, the ex-Dominican, in the *Chrétien Français*, described two Paris gatherings on a very wet Sunday. One, in a Protestant Church, where an excellent discourse was delivered by the pastor, was very thinly attended. The other was at the Trocadero, which, despite the very heavy rain, was crammed with five thousand people, while the crowd outside was enormous. It was to celebrate the *fête* of " Reason." The speakers proclaimed themselves as Atheists ; spoke of " the dead God on whom the priests live ; " " but saluted

Is Christianity Passing ?

morality, moral force, justice, the social order," etc. Bourrier thinks, however, that, despite their phrases, they were really remaking religion.

With Catholic Christianity in this position in France, how is Continental Protestantism faring ? It is an insignificant minority in France, though exercising an influence far beyond its numerical proportions. In Holland, Professor Gunning, of the University of Leyden, says, "The masses in Holland are alienated from the Church." And what of Germany, Luther's land ? Some years ago the late Dr. Stöcker, the eloquent court chaplain at Berlin, gave this testimony : "German Protestantism is sick, sick unto death. In the North and North-east the Friends of Christianity are among the aristocracy and among the peasants ; while in the middle classes, the educated, industrial, commercial people are, with few exceptions, opposed to the Church. The working men of the towns, belonging, as they often do, to the Social Democratic party, are necessarily hostile." Another clerical witness, Pastor Eric Förster, says : "In Mecklenburg, Pomerania, and the Mark of Brandenburg, that is, the most purely Protestant part of Germany, the Church is dead." These were testimonies of some ten years back, and there is no sign that the drift of things, so far as concerns organised Protestantism, has been altered or converted. The prominent working-class leaders, the Bebels, the Bernsteins, are, like their predecessors, Marx and Lassalle, bitterly hostile to Christianity, and they carry their followers with them. Inside the Church the state of affairs may be indicated from the fact that at the Universities the Divinity classes, which used to be

The Life of the Soul

crowded, now show bare boards, and that there is almost a famine of candidates for the Protestant pulpit.

England and America, the great Protestant centres, show a different spectacle from this, but even here we see the organised Church in an increasingly difficult position, everywhere the struggling against odds. As to America, Dr. Gladden recently declared that Congregationalism was a Church of the employers rather than of the employed. New York on Sunday presents the aspects of a pagan city, and the same is even more true of Chicago and San Francisco. And our own London! Anyone who watches in church hours its mighty stream of life moving hither, thither, by road and rail, by motor and tram or on foot, to the links, to the tennis court, to the open, to the sea, or indoors to the cinematograph show—any whither but to the church door—has evidence enough of what is going on. The congregation is more and more that of the parents—less and less that of their children. If the movement of the last twenty years goes on for another twenty years—and it promises to go on with an increasing velocity—what shall we have in London and in England? Plainly, in England and the world, we are up against a big question for our existing Christianity.

For our *existing* Christianity, we say. For that is where the whole question lies; that is where we may most easily mistake the signs of the times. It may easily be that our present Christianity is passing. That is very different from saying that Christianity itself is passing, or is likely to pass. Let us here consider one or two plain facts. The

Is Christianity Passing ?

first is that the "existing Christianity" always has been passing. As an historical development that has ever been its fate, and this because of laws that are not passing, but are permanent. So far its history has been that of nothing else but deaths and rebirths. What was the first Christianity ? It was that of Galilee and Judæa, when Jesus was present with His disciples. It was, in a way, the highest, the most vivid, actual, veridical Christianity the world has seen, or will see ; the Christianity of the Master's personal presence, of His smile, His inspiring word ; the Christianity of the Sermon on the Mount, warm from His lips ; of the parables, of the healings, of of the wondering awe, of the rapture in simple hearts as they looked upon a life, a personality such as men had never seen before. That Christianity died upon the Cross. It was a chapter closed and finished. This Jesus was never more seen on the earth. The resurrection faith, in all the forms it took, and testified of, presents us always with another, a spiritual person, filling the hearts of believers with indescribable enthusiasm, creating a Church, revolutionising a world, but never again the weary pilgrim that men had seen by the lake, the inspired discourses at the supper table, the martyr at Golgotha.

Here, then, was one dead Christianity, extinct for evermore. And that has been followed by so many others ! That of the apostolic age, when men received their Gospel by word of mouth, took it from men who had seen the Lord ; the age without a New Testament, when a living inspiration broke from apostolic lips ; when the substance of our Gospels passed in fluid form, as a memory, a tradition from

The Life of the Soul

lip to lip ; that also in a generation or so died, never to be revived. It requires a patient study of the period, and of what followed it, to realise the enormous transformation which took place between that second Christianity and the later which succeeded it ; that later in which the pastor became a priest, in which the supper was turned into a magical mystery ; in which for the Sermon on the Mount and the apostolic counsels men were offered the web of metaphysics called the creeds as the objects of Christian beliefs. Remember that for long centuries afterwards the extraordinary amalgam called Catholicism, amalgam of popes, councils, ecclesiastical hierarchies, metaphysical creeds, with the Bible as background, a Bible hidden from the laity ; that this was practically all the Christianity extant in the world. At the Reformation that Christianity died for all the succeeding Protestant peoples. The Reformers and their children, through all these after generations, had done with masses, transubstantiation, Church infallibilities, priestly absolution, monks and monkeries ; lived on another Christianity, a Christianity of open Bibles, of simple worship, of a growing freedom of private judgment. One might prolong the story to our own day. Where now is the Christianity of the Commonwealth men, of the Covenanters, of the early Quakers, even of the first Methodists ? You may look for it all over the globe and find it nowhere.

Surely this is significant, if only we will look into it properly ? Lying here behind us, clear in plainest view, is a history of extinct Christianities ; dead, and in their old form never to live again. In our perturbation at what seems passing to-day, is it not

Is Christianity Passing ?

a little astonishing that we take so coolly what has happened in the past ? As if what is happening now were unheard of and absolutely without precedent, whereas it is full of precedent ; simply a further illustration of what has been happening all the time, and by the very law of things is bound to happen.

It is time we inquired what this law of things is. Historical Christianity, in the vast transformations which we see it to have undergone, has been under conformity, and will be, so far as seems, to the end, to the changeless law of change. In the material world we see ever the same force, but ever in transition ; one in itself, but Protean in its forms ; appearing now as motion, now as heat, now as chemical energy, now as electricity ; never at rest, eternally at its permutations and transformations. And this which is true of the inorganic, dead world, as we call it, is even more visibly true of the organic, of the world alive. No moment here of permanence, all a rush of life and death. Stay the death of particles in your body, their decay and removal, and you stop your own life. Death, everywhere, is the renewer, the supporter of life. The child dies in becoming a youth, the youth in becoming a man. *Panta rēi*, " Everything in flux," said old Heraclitus ; modern evolution is but the echo of that ancient word.

Christianity is cast into the cosmic system ; appears as a part of it, and must therefore of necessity be subject to its laws. Never has it been a static but always a dynamic. Even its seeming most stationary elements obey those laws. You speak of its Scriptures, of its doctrines, as there in permanence. No. As a factor in human life they change

The Life of the Soul

with every human being they touch. There are as many Christianities as there are Christians. Are the Scriptures the same to the child who spells his way through them as to your professor of Biblical criticism? You may call your Book the same. It is never the same to the souls that read it, and they are here the matter in question. To grumble at this is to grumble at the law of this universe and at the God who made it.

Evidently, to get a true outlook upon our Christianity we have to understand somewhat better than we have done the ways of the universe in which it has appeared. And its way is the same for the visible and the invisible. The law in the visible world is the law in the spiritual realm. Mr. Moody once, in discussing revivals, dropped a pregnant remark. Said he, "God never repeats Himself." It is true, and covers the entire field. Human souls, like human bodies, live under a ceaseless evolution. They would die if they refused to obey it. We live under a world-policeman whose word is "move on." We are under a perpetual compulsion to take the next step. Every fresh discovery in science, in history, in our knowledge of earth and of man is a reiteration of the call, a fresh pressure from behind. And beneath all this, beneath our brains and our thinking, is the vast rush of the life-stream itself, carrying us, as with the sweep of a planet, carrying us forwards, onwards, towards bournes we do not see.

Christianity is afloat on that tide. It is a part of the movement, and is being carried along with it. But let us here reassure ourselves. We have to look here at something that is bigger even than historical Christianity. We have to look at the Power

Is Christianity Passing ?

and Purpose that are behind it. For as the scientist finds in the cosmos a changeless power and law, working through incessant change, so in the inner, spiritual cosmos we find ourselves up against that same changeless law and power. And they work always in one way, and towards one end, upward, upward. And the power is an exhaustless power. Do we think the Providence which produced Jesus and the Church exhausted itself in that effort ; that the spiritual movement then introduced is, from lack of further energies, doomed to futility ? Force in the spiritual realm is as eternal as force in the material. It can never exhaust itself. Origen, the subtlest brain as well as the holiest soul among the Greek Fathers, has here a daring utterance. Recognising Christianity as part of a Divine, spiritual movement, he regards it as preparation for something even higher than itself. He speaks of it as the feature of an eternal Gospel, a stage of it destined in its turn to be outgrown.

Well, the Christianity of his time *has* been superseded and outgrown ! We could not come back to it if we tried. And we may be equally certain that a thousand years hence the Christianity of our time will have been outgrown, and our successors will be no more able to come back to us than we could go back to him.

But let us get back now to our present and our immediate future. What is the bearing of all this upon our existing church conditions ? Is the decay in church attendance, then, and similar symptoms, evidence of a decay of Christianity ? We might here ask another question. Is there evidence anywhere that the Founder of Christianity

The Life of the Soul

placed the decay or growth of Christianity in a census of church attendance ? This question, we are convinced, is one not so much of religion as of a new social and economic condition ; it is a question of our having now eighty per cent. of our population crowded into stuffy cities, mewed up in stifling homes, and workshops, and factories. The modern Sunday is the rush of human lungs to the open air ; of hungry eyes to a sight of green fields, of cramped muscles to a place to stretch them in. Added to that is the fact that literature has so largely taken the place of the sermon ; is often so much better a sermon, and listened to under such easier conditions. The Gospel inside the Church is suffering grievously from stuffiness ; the Gospel outside the Church, in a freer air, is everywhere winning new triumphs. One might say that the Christianity of to-day, as compared with that of yesterday, exhibits the change from a liquid to a gas ; has broken out from a fixed to an elastic form ; has become less and less an institution, and more and more an atmosphere. The Sermon on the Mount never had a more attentive hearing. The substitution of Christ's spiritual for the Devil's animal never had a more promising future.

The prospects of the Church for the time now before us will depend on the way in which it adapts itself to the new conditions. The people are all for the open, in mind and body, and the Church must also come into the open. It has upon it an enormous charge. It is the depository and the nucleus of all that is most precious to human life. The world cannot get on without its force and its message. We have spoken of Germany and France as turning

Is Christianity Passing ?

away from its ministrations. But in both countries how the movement of their highest thought is steadily back to a spiritual interpretation of life ; how Eucken in one and Bergson in the other are attacking materialism, and what a response is being given to their call for deeper, higher things ! No, we are not discouraged. History and the laws of the universe forbid that. They show us a death that is ever followed by a resurrection. The Galilee Christianity in a way is dead ; the Apostolic Christianity in a way is dead. And so is the mediæval. But we see how this death was a prelude to a vaster life. The law still holds. What of death there is in our present Christianity is only the preparation for greater things to come. The law of the spirit of life in Jesus Christ has in store its noblest triumphs over the law of sin and death.

XII

RELIGION AND FEELING

THE relation of feeling to religion is fundamental. It goes to the root of the matter. There is no aspect of the spiritual life which it does not affect. The differences of view on this point have led to profound distinctions in Churches and in theologies. The supreme importance of the matter has in these later days dawned upon three orders of thinkers—the scientists, the philosophers and the theologians. To all three of them, and to the first two especially, religion has gained a new interest and a new standpoint. They are studying the subject not so much as a revelation from heaven, as for a revelation of the structure and qualities of the human soul. They begin, not with affirmations about the Divinity, but with the study of man. They read the lives of the saints, to discover if they can what basis of reality lies behind their recorded experiences; what truth of life their visions, their emotions, their volitions actually stand for. Hence we have such books as Höffding's "Philosophy of Religion," Pacheu's "Psychologie des Mystiques," and James's "Varieties of Religious Experience." Writers of this order, while differing widely in their starting points and in their conclusions, have this in common, that they treat their subject as an affair of sheer scientific analysis. They apply to it their microscope,

Religion and Feeling

their scalpel, as to any other natural object. It is something remarkable for them to investigate; to wring out of it, if possible, its secret. The simple Christian believer, falling into such company, will often be startled, and sometimes shocked by what he hears from them. Yet they are well worth listening to, for their side of the matter is a real one, if only part of the whole.

Amongst theologians it was Schleiermacher who opened to the modern world the significance of feeling in its relation to religion. There has hardly been, before or since, a man better qualified for the task. For he spoke not simply as the man who saw, but as the man who, from the depths of his soul, had felt. The child of deeply pious parents, his exquisitely pure and tender nature—truly one may say *anima naturaliter Christiana*—open in its aspirations to every breath of heaven, his early training amongst the Moravian community introduced him to every phase of emotional religion as it flourished in that fervid community. At Herrnhut a strict evangelical doctrine was fused into an ecstatic devotion, in which for a time his soul was steeped. Later came the reaction, when the claims of an intellect of extraordinary force and range asserted themselves, and forced him out of the pietistic Eden into the desert of doubt and almost despair. But the desert time, as with all true souls, proved an entirely fruitful one. In the end we see the intellect, having carried its researches into every region of knowledge, coming back to faith. It finds itself in a new and beautiful accord with that earlier feeling, observes it from a new and higher standpoint, sees all its deepest implications, as an integral and

The Life of the Soul

unspeakably precious part in any complete philosophy of life. The fruit of those meditations appeared in the famous *Reden*, or Discourses on Religion, which came to the sceptical Germany of his day almost as a revelation. Here was a foremost intellect startling his countrymen with the affirmation that their denials were a mere narrowness ; telling them to look deeper into their own souls ; telling them that religion in its essence was no mere theologic formula, no mere doctrine of the schools, but an ultimate element in their own structure, a portion of their essential being, without which it was impossible to understand either themselves or their universe.

Schleiermacher, of course, had his limitations, which we can see to-day. His view that the religious feeling was primarily a sense of dependence does not satisfy us. It contains so much more than that. One remembers Hegel's criticism : " It makes the dog a more pious animal than his master." And it is to us an extraordinary limitation of view which made it possible for him to address himself simply to the cultured classes, under the idea that the labouring multitude were, by their slavery to mechanical tasks, incapable of the deeper religious feeling. Could he not have remembered that in the first age Christianity gained its most enthusiastic recruits from that very class ? He wrote in Germany. Had he been in England at the time he would have found that Methodism, where the religious feeling exhibited itself in its intensest forms, was a movement, at its beginning, almost entirely confined to that class.

But leaving Schleiermacher, let us try here a little thinking of our own. Feeling comes before thought,

Religion and Feeling

is the foundation of thought. It is the first reaction of the soul in its contact with the external. It is the soul's reply to the touch of the universe. We should never know ourselves apart from that contact. The outer world, with its events, its pressure upon us, is the organist who plays on our instrument. Those successive touches call out our every note. We should never know the notes were there apart from that handling. Our joy, our sorrow, our admiration, our disgust, our fear, our hope are at the beginning mute possibilities, with no facility of realising themselves apart from the outside call. And when, in response to that call, they do speak, their voice is final. There is no appeal against their verdict. No argument, no pleading can persuade us that the pain we feel is not pain, that our joy is anything else than joy. Civilisation is crammed with falsities, but there is no falsity in our feeling. And so we have to go to it for the final truths.

This feature in feeling—its absolute truth-telling—shows clearest in our bodily sensations. But it is not less veridical in our higher part. Our moral nature, by an imperious necessity, loves what is lovable, hates what is hateful. And here it is that we have our final test of a true and false religion. What the heart rejects is a final rejection. Our finest instincts are a court of appeal more decisive than the subtlest logic of the schools. "We needs must love the highest when we see it." Yes, and we needs must spurn the lowest when we see it. As that instinct becomes cultivated, and learns to trust itself, it will prove the death-blow to all faiths that fall below its standard. It is the growth of the human heart that is making impossible all the old theologic

The Life of the Soul

cruelties. The God within us is good, and will accordingly recognise no God without that is not good. So, too, our science, our philosophy, all rest ultimately upon feeling. Why this incessant search for the true; why these enormous pains to sift it from the false; why trouble as to whether the sun goes round the earth or the earth round the sun? Does the knowledge of it make one penny of difference to you? And yet we pursue, and shall pursue, this incessant quest, and there is absolutely no reason for it but a primal feeling of the soul; the instinct which tells it that truth is lovable and at all costs to be followed. Without that feeling there had been no science.

It was upon feeling, and not upon dogma, that Christianity was founded. Newman, in his "Apologia," tells us: "From the age of fifteen dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion. I know no other religion. Religion as a mere sentiment is to me a dream and a mockery." As we read this we wonder what his religion would have been if he had lived before the age of dogma? We know what his dogma was; that of the Councils of the fourth and fifth centuries, enlarged afterwards by the decisions of Trent. But there was some genuine religion before those dates. The religion of Jesus Himself was assuredly not that of dogma; not of these dogmas. You search the Galilee teaching in vain for much of what you find there. The religion of Jesus, in Himself, and as communicated to others, was a life, a personality, a Divine communion, a Divine power. It was a love, a trust, a fellowship, a suffering, all lived and acted, all felt in the soul, beyond anything, deeper than

Religion and Feeling

anything that could be put into words. It was that life, that devotion, that sacrifice, flowing in spiritual power upon men's souls, that converted them, that made them Christians. The spiritual condition in Jesus produced a new spiritual condition in His disciples. Here may we say with Hermann in his "Christian's Communion with God": "We are Christians because in the human Jesus we have met with a fact whose content is incomparably richer than that of any feelings which arise within ourselves, a fact, moreover, which makes us so certain of God, that our conviction of being in communion with Him can justify itself at the bar of reason and of conscience."

But while contending for the supremacy of feeling, as the ultimate, final quality of our souls, let us be clear about one thing. Feeling never exists, never acts, alone. It is full of thought, of reason. In its simplest, primitive states it contains a deeper reason than our conscious one; the Reason that formed us, that is continuously at work upon us. And so feeling contains, as it were, our own logic in solution. Our logic forms itself out of that, and later assumes its definite shapes. And reason and feeling working in this way, each into the other, by and by unite in a definite conception of their relative place. From this co-operation, the primitive feeling becomes ever purer, higher in its content and action. So it is that in the end the better our thought the surer our feeling.

It is when we understand the laws of feeling that we can see how to use it, and how not to misuse it. We see, for instance, the truth of Professor James's statement, in his "Varieties of Religious Experience,"

The Life of the Soul

that "spiritual excitement takes pathological—*i.e.*, diseased—forms whenever other interests are too few and the intellect too narrow." You have illustrations of that in the wild religious ecstasies of the Montanists in the second century, and those of some of the German sects in Luther's time. "Other interests were too few and the intellect too narrow." We see also in religion that feeling is not to be cultivated in us as though it were an end in itself. It is in us as a driving power; fuel to a machine that is meant to do work. We have to beware of too much expression of religious feeling. That is a most true and deeply significant word of Carlyle: "It is a sad but sure truth that every time you speak of a fine purpose, especially if with eloquence and to the admiration of bystanders, there is less chance of your ever making a fact of it in your poor life." So fatally easy is it to let our fine feeling evaporate in words, instead of silently turning its energy to the doing of deeds.

And finally it is an outrage upon our religious feeling—our dearest gift from God—to force it by artificial and exaggerated stimulation. There is no side of us, and this least of all, that can with impunity be forced to a feverish and abnormal activity. Nature's reply is invariably that of reaction. It is here, especially with weaker and unbalanced natures, as when you set fire to combustible materials. Some revivals we have seen in our day have illustrated that law. They have raged over districts like a forest fire, producing for a time a splendid illumination, but leaving behind them a wilderness of blackened stumps. The religious indifference that has followed means simply that the peoples thus

Religion and Feeling

dealt with have had their capacity for emotion burned up, and have to wait till a further supply has accumulated. If our religious teachers desire really to bring about the reign of God in this world, they must do it by themselves obeying the laws of God. And those laws are writ deep in the fundamental structure of the soul.

XIII

OF HAVING AND GETTING

THAT saying of Jesus, "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath," seems at first sight one of the most cynical of utterances. It fits in so exactly with the way of the world. The people who have, the *beati possidentes*, as Bismarck once described them ; the holders of fat purses, born with a silver spoon in their mouths, to them all seems given. Society fawns upon them. They get its compliments, its titles, its obsequious service. That they have is the reason for their always getting more. "Money makes money," The position of these "haves" enables them, moreover, to prey upon the "have nots." A threatened coal strike enables the capitalists to raise the price of coal, a price which the almost destitute have to pay. The humble toilers, at the bottom of the scale, look up from their misery to watch the idle rich, who "toil not, neither spin," with nothing to do but to receive their revenues and to spend them on their follies. They look up, to curse a world where such things are.

Was Jesus, in His utterance, condoning this state of things, describing it as life's inevitable law? It was hardly like Him to do that. Hardly like Him who suggested to the rich young man to "sell all that he had, and give to the poor." There is, by the

Of Having and Getting

way, in the "Gospel to the Egyptians," an enlarged account of this interview which we might well accept as authentic. In this narrative we read: "The Lord said to him, How canst thou say I have fulfilled the law, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,' and behold many of thy brethren, sons of Abraham, are clothed in foul garments, and perish of hunger, and thy house is full of many good things, and nothing cometh out of it to them?" Were He to appear in our midst to-day there is little doubt, in the matter of "have" *v.* "have not," which side He would be on. But here is the curious thing. It is He, the carpenter's son, who had not where to lay His head, who makes this startling declaration about "him that hath." Plainly there is a meaning here which is not the cynical one, which points in quite another direction.

It is not this or that transitory condition of society, but what lies behind, at the basis of life, that is here in question. Standing there we find in these New Testament words a group of truths that are vital and fundamental, and which furnish a platform from which the outlook is vast and inspiring. We have here neither Socialism nor anti-Socialism, but a doctrine of man; a doctrine which, amidst all possible changes, continues always the same. It contemplates man as the possessor of something, and because a possessor therefore a receiver. It offers a law about the conditions of possessing, and also of receiving. It supposes that all of us—the meanest and poorest of us—have something to begin with, and that everything depends on what we do with that something. Its dealing is not with man as a mere social or economic factor, but with

The Life of the Soul

man as a moral being ; with man as possessing intellect, conscience, and will ; in fine, with man as a soul. And that not as a complete soul, but rather a soul in the making. We come into the world with the beginnings of it all ; germs of it, with a vast possibility of development. That is what we have ; and the way we deal with this " have " determines all we shall get. It is precisely as we work upon this innermost " have " of ours, as we train it, ascertain the eternal laws of it, and render to them our entire obedience, that it becomes available for receiving. If we use this innermost treasure rightly it will return upon us with ever-accumulating interest ; if we use it wrongly the capital itself will be taken away.

The applications of this law are endless, but let us, as a concrete example, begin with the class with which we started, and where the statement seemed to have so cynical an application : the class of the world's possessors. A man is born into this class ; with all the comforts, all the luxuries, ready to his hand. Inside him, looking out over these things, is his faculty of reception, of enjoyment. It is for the moment the fullest equipped, biggest part of him. That, because he and his ancestors were animals, before they were men. But behind this animalism lie the things which make him a man—his conscience, his sense of duty, his spiritual faculty. Supposing now our man, leaving this inner area of him, his true manhood, all neglected and undeveloped, lets loose on the things around him his animal receptiveness ; fills himself with all of world, flesh and devil his money can buy, what will follow ? The working, the terrible inevitable working, of the New Testament

Of Having and Getting

law. This man, with all his "have," will become a "have not." He has lived for enjoyment, and his enjoyment will be taken from him. His pleasures will cease to please. "It all becomes very disgusting in the long run," was the naïve confession of a professed libertine to the present writer. His money can buy everything except the one thing he wants—enjoyment. The honest labourer, on fifteen shillings a week, enjoying his sleep at nights, eating his bread and bacon with appetite in the open air, is a prince compared with this man who has run through all the gamut of animal sensation, to find himself at thirty bankrupt of life.

There is no "hath" worth having that is not worked for, and the work must always be an inward work. Our primary gifts are nothing until they are cultivated; until we have put heart and soul into their development. And precisely as we work at them, obey the laws of them, do these gifts extend their faculty of reception. Life here, if we give it a chance, is extraordinarily generous. We learn to read, and all literature is open to us. We cultivate music, and the world of sound becomes a new heaven to the spirit. Whatever you learn becomes a life-long possession. The seeds you sow in the mind never cease from yielding their harvests. And the higher you go in this cultivation the more subtle, the more profoundly satisfying are the values that flow in. The more, in our self discipline, we rise above the world, the more surely, the more richly it belongs to us. For then behind its material we find always the spiritual; simple things become avenues to ineffable joys. John Wesley, a slight, slim figure weighing a surprisingly small number of

The Life of the Soul

pounds avoirdupois on the scale, cultivates his faith, his love to God and man, and offers them to his fellows. To-day some thirty millions of Methodists offer him their homage, and that represents but a small part of his influence in the world. To minds so cultivated who possess a "have" of this sort, the very trials, suffering, hardships which are the stock-in-trade of pessimism, become means of inner refreshment. A writer of the second generation of the Pilgrim Fathers complains that in the new, more comfortable circumstances, the spiritual joys of the people had become much less than "in the time of wants." The well-to-do Wesleyans of to-day sing sometimes in their well-furnished churches that wonderful hymn—

Who suffer with our Master here
Shall soon before His face appear,
And by His side sit down.

But do they get from it any of that spiritual rapture with which their fathers sang it; the men of the first generation, who for their faith were stoned, dragged through horse-ponds, exposed to every insult by raging mobs? These were truly of the *beati possidentes*, who "having nothing possessed all things."

But these considerations, important as they are, are mere fringes of the main topic. "To him that hath shall be given" rightly studied forms the finest and most final of challenges as to the position and destiny of man. Its argument is that because man has what he has he may expect an infinity of things that are to come to him. One might say this of his inheritance in this world. He is undoubtedly to be the conqueror, the possessor of it in a way hardly dreamed of as yet. He has, so far, barely scratched

Of Having and Getting

its surface. The hidden depths of power and possibility remain yet to be revealed. But that is only a small part of the matter. It is when we come from the visible world to Man himself, to what he is in essential being, that the theme opens to its true dimensions. We have lived through the epoch of the human dethronement. Fifty years ago science professed to have rediscovered man, to have put him in his place. Biology had traced his animal descent, his affinity with the anthropoid apes. Other investigations had told with seemingly shattering effect upon the freedom of his will. He was, as much as all other living beings, a part of nature, a creation of matter and force. His feelings were nerve reactions, the result of outside stimuli. The brain secreted thought as the liver secreted bile. He was simply a mechanism, a creature of heredity and environment. In the dry light of these discoveries the old philosophies, the old idealisms, the old religion, the old God, all have vanished. As a French writer puts it, the "*hypothèse Dieu s'élimine.*"

That was the new faith of fifty years ago. We are now far enough from it to wonder how so amazing a position could ever for a moment gain possession of intelligent minds. We are now recovering ourselves, and asking questions of science. We are asking how a universe non-intelligent at the beginning could produce intelligence. We know the carpenter can make the table, but the table make the carpenter? As Professor Janet puts it: "Everything leads to the belief that if nature began by chaos, it would never have come out of it." The materialist has to ask himself how it comes about that the very thought which makes him a materialist should be in

The Life of the Soul

itself so essentially unmaterial? Did it belong to matter; why has it none of the characteristics of matter; why should a great thought not fill a commensurate space; why should a weighty idea not be weighed in ounces or pounds avoirdupois? If anyone wants the present attitude of science and philosophy on these questions let him read Bergson's "Time and Free Will," and Eucken on "Life's Basis and Life's Ideal," where the one, by purely scientific arguments and demonstrations, shatters the mid-Victorian necessitarianism, and the other, by a procedure different but not less cogent, exhibits humanity as beginning in Nature but essentially beyond and above it.

Again, we are asking, and with full reason, not simply how things have happened, but why? We are looking not simply to beginnings but ends. Put man's beginnings at the bottom; derive him from the dust. Put the primitive soul at the lowest; say of it, if you will:

Body and spirit are two, God only knows which is which,
The soul squats down in the flesh, like a tinker drunk
in a ditch.

But the question is, How is it that from humblest origins it has developed along the line we see it on; developed obedience, the sense of duty, the force of love; developed ideals, developed religion; developed the sense and feeling of a spiritual world, the belief in an unseen Holy to which it passionately cleaves? All these are facts of life, as much as is the grey matter of the brain, and with a deeper question in them than any grey matter can offer. The spirit of man is full of affirmations about itself, which find their answer not in matter but in life.

Of Having and Getting

It is here, in his position as a spiritual being in a spiritual universe, that man stands before us as the great possessor. And here it is we find the tremendous meaning of the word, "To him that hath shall be given." For his possession here means nothing at all if it does not mean the preparation for, and the invitation to a reception. It is because the soul, by the irresistible working of its own nature, creates great hopes, that we have the surest argument for their fulfilment. As Fouillée puts it: "The ideal is but the deepest sense and anticipation of the future reality." Is not Lodge within the realm of fact when he argues: "Our highest thoughts are likely to be nearest to reality. They must be stages in the direction of truth, else they would not have come to us, and been recognised as the highest"? We may trust here to Nature's economy. She does not waste her material. She has not furnished the ox in the field, the fish in the sea, with expectations that go beyond their limits. Are we to think that she has lavished on man the boundless wealth of expectation, of spiritual aspiration, for no purpose at all?

Can a finite thing created in the bounds of time and space ;
Can it live and grow and love Thee, catch the glory of Thy
face ;

Fade and die, be gone for ever ; know no being, have no place ?

"To him that hath." We have now one-half of our being ; the half of faith, of growing fitness, of infinite desire. And yonder, whence our spirit came, waits the other half which shall complete us.

XIV

THE DEEPENING OF LIFE

IN speaking of the deepening of life we are, of course, using the words in an accommodated sense. We cannot make life deeper than it is. It was here before us, deep, deep as eternity. Our own consciousness has beneath it an abyss of being beyond all our thought. Towards the ultimate reality our eye strains itself in vain. We get shadows of it; hints, suggestions enough to fire the imagination, to stir the noblest hopes. But we walk by faith, not by sight. The higher our intelligence the more baffling the mystery. Says Eckhart, that grand old mystic, "Many people hope to see God as one sees an ox." A naïve expectation that, which we have ceased to share. And of life, not in its ultimate sources, but as showing in ourselves, we know so little. We are kept going by a machinery which works independently of our will. We know only the surface of ourselves. Science, in this subject, uses a different language from that of thirty years ago. "Life," says Sir Oliver Lodge, "appears to me something whose full significance lies in another scheme of things, but which touches and interacts with this material universe in a certain way, building its particles into notable configurations for a time—without confounding any physical laws—and then evaporating whence it came." Says

The Deepening of Life

Flammarion, "The sub-conscious nature does not seem to depend upon the organism. It is probably anterior to it, and will survive it." In our own consciousness, and in utterances such as these, we obtain glimpses of the depth of life, as it is in itself.

Our concern, however, is not with this aspect of the question. We propose to deal here not with life itself as the ultimate mystery, but with our own attitude towards it. Life is deep enough, but are *we* deep, or in the way of becoming so? Are we digging down or only skimming the surface? Are we extracting and storing any inner deposits, or allowing the fleeting years to leave no trace? It is a question both of the individual and of the national life. We see here enormous differences between one man and another, between one race and one age and another. Our own age seems in these matters to be at the crossways. It is not sure what we are here for, or what we should strive after. It interprets in such opposite ways the meaning of the world, of the cosmic discipline under which we find ourselves. Is our existence, in Voltaire's words, "*une mauvaise plaisanterie*," or has it a serious meaning? Are we extracting from it amusement, or chagrin, or something else? Have we acquired a definite attitude towards our environment, a recognised way of dealing with circumstance, so that events beat upon us as the stream upon the mill wheel, turning machinery and grinding corn; or as the wave that beats upon the rock—its one effect corrosion and destruction? What is nature's own view here? Has she, in the long history that is behind, disclosed any spiritual purpose towards us? Is her process an idle clash of forces, indifferent as

The Life of the Soul

to ends ; or can we discern in her operations a recognisable scheme for the soul ? Is man here to pass a few years in a stupid acquiescence, in a careless indifference, in a bestial revel, in a passionate and despairing antagonism ; or is he here as a pilgrim of eternity, the seeker of an end that is central, an adventurer of the infinite, a tracker of ultimate Reality, who, searching ever further, sinking ever deeper, shall at last find himself in God ? These are the problems which our age confronts, and which men and nations, in their separate ways, are trying to settle for themselves.

Certainly nature, the constitution of things, in some plainly visible directions, works towards the deepening of life. We are harnessed to civilisation, and civilisation, amongst other things, means work. We are born into a system which demands of us an ordered energy, an energy which tells not only on the thing we are doing, but at every stroke backward upon our character. An onlooker observing us from some other sphere would say that at least we seem tolerably busy. There never was a busier age. The world shakes with the thunder of our machinery ; it is hot with the fever of our activities. The pace grows quicker every year. It seems as if in the immediate future idleness will become a criminal offence. And we have something to show for our work. We are cutting and carving our world as though it were wax in our hands. We are making it work as it never did before. Every quality of its elements, every ounce of its energy, is being called into play. And all this reacts upon character, making us swift, eager, quick-witted, versatile, ingenious.

The Deepening of Life

But civilisation is discovering that work—at least, this kind of work—with all its advantages, has some woeful limitations. Our machinery has a way of making men into machines. Our routine deepens men the wrong way : deepens them, presses them, into ugly ruts of mechanical habit, where they neither see nor feel aught beyond their immediate task. Worse than that, when at the goal of his exertions, in the full tide of his most successful activities, there creeps over man the sickening doubt as to the good of it all ; as to whether the game, however well played, is worth the candle. When he has reached the height of his ambition, will he find there aught but a barren vacancy, his height a point where the winds beat more furiously than below ? It was such a feeling that came with overpowering force upon the mind of John Stuart Mill when, as he records, in 1826, he asked himself the question : “ Suppose that all your objects in life were realised, that all the changes in institutions and opinions which you are looking forward to could be completely effected at this very instant, would that be a great joy and happiness to you ? And an irrepressible self-consciousness distinctly answered ‘ No.’ ” He speaks of the melancholy which thereupon immediately fell upon him, and which for a long period afterward pressed him down. One wonders here that it did not occur to so acute a mind that in most activities the joy is in the striving rather than in the result ; in the chase more than in the fox-brush at the end. And there were deeper considerations which Mill, noble character that he was, seems both then and afterwards so strangely to have missed.

The Life of the Soul

Plainly these activities of the external life, however fast and furious, however magnificent their apparent result, do not satisfy the human problem, do not fill the human soul. And this seems to carry with it the conclusion that they were not meant to satisfy. And it is precisely here that the cosmic order appears once more to show its hand. It hints at depths of life to which our surface labours do not reach ; at objects of our being that are beyond their sphere. We pause in our rush to ask, " Where, after all, is the Reality which is our true possession ? " Then we are reminded of another push which nature gives us in that direction ; that of what we call evil, sorrow, suffering. Sorrow is one of the universals. Joy is a perhaps ; suffering is a certainty. The world's evil has been the cornerstone of scepticism, the rock on which atheism builds its church. To us all it is the everlasting perplexity. "*Si Deus, unde malum ? Si non Deus, unde bonum ?*" (" If there is a God, whence came evil ? If there is no God, whence came good ? ") So men weary themselves with this question. Michelet said the French were the only people who knew how to suffer gaily. Yet nowhere has the pain of things produced a deeper pessimism. "*On entre, on crie ; c'est la vie ; On crie, on sort ; c'est la mort.*" One could hardly find in literature a terser, darker summation of life. But is there no solution that is not confused, or contradictory, or despairing ? The suffering, the weariness, the decay, the oncoming death, which beat through all our successes ; find their way behind all our outside achievements, have they no meaning but a cynical one ? Are we not rather pushed to the conclusion that their purpose lies in the deepening

The Deepening of Life

of life; Nature's further thrust at us to push us back from the surface things; to compel us upon some centre within?

This is to say—we have been long coming to it—that Nature has a religious meaning. But let us be sure what we mean by religion. The Churches are all around us, offering us their special brands, their final solutions. But as we study them we are confronted with that modern attitude which sees in this direction often more difficulties than helps to faith. Some of them offer us a revelation compact, precise and ready-made, an answer let down from heaven to all our questions. In their authoritative documents we have angels talking, verbal messages transmitted, voices from the clouds. One might suppose that in earlier times earth and the celestial spheres were in as direct communication as London and New York. To the modern mind, all this, we say, is a difficulty rather than a help to faith. For our age finds the heavens singularly reticent. If there is any religion for us to-day, it does not come that way. The most tremendous fact for us now is the silence of the spiritual world. Our religious speech is human speech; and we know no other. All that comes to us from past or present in this sphere is the echo of man's aspiration, of man's guess. But is this fact the destroyer, or even the embarrassment, of faith? We are beginning now to learn better. We know that if the cosmic order is silent on this question, it is not inactive. Its answer is not in talk, but in deed. Its very silence is a pressure, meant for the deepening of life. We are thrust in upon ourselves, that from the depths there we may get the response we seek. The "voice from the

The Life of the Soul

excellent glory " of which men of old speak, was the voice from the centre of the soul. And its message is authentic.

Where humanity develops a crying want it is on the road towards the supply. And the surest proof to-day of religion is the fact that man cannot get on, individually or nationally, without it. An evidence of this is given in the present condition of France. One of the most arresting books of our time is the work by M. Fouillée, one of her ablest thinkers, on "*La France, au Point de vue Moral.*" In some respects it is an appalling picture. Criminality has trebled there in extent during the last fifty years, and the worst feature of it is the condition of the youthful population. The youthful criminality more than doubles that of the adults. In tracing the causes of it M. Fouillée speaks of the breaking up of the home-life ; the influx of the country to the town ; the unfettered licence of the pornographic press ; and, gravest of all, a system of national education which cultivates the brain, while paying little or no attention to the soul. He is no clericalist, far from it ; he is a philosopher, pure and simple. But the statistics and his knowledge of human nature show him clearly enough that a nation cannot live without a high morality, and that no strong morality can exist without the spiritual sanction. It is in Brittany, where a naïve faith exists, that the criminal statistics are the lowest, where the virile virtues are highest. As a cultivated scientist, Fouillée has the keenest sense of the mental impossibilities of that faith. But he sees that it contains a genuine religion ; and it is a pure, genuine religion that can alone save

The Deepening of Life

France. Art, science, industry, commerce, literature, have their great place in the national life. But of themselves they are not deep enough. The ultimate requisite is something that can cleanse and vivify the soul.

France, for the deepening of its life, needs a deeper religion than it has got. And that is the need of us all. That religion is here waiting for us. "The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart." The great spiritual teachers have known this. They found religion in the religions. Their instinct led them through all the outside trappings to the centre. Montesquieu was not thinking of the ceremonial or dogmatic crust of Christianity when he thus described its essence: "A religion which envelopes all the passions; which is not more jealous of actions than of desires and thoughts; which holds us not by chains but by innumerable threads; which leaves behind it human justice, and begins another justice," Gerard Groote, of the fourteenth century, living in the heart of Catholicism, nurtured in its traditions, as he spoke to the multitudes who hung, entranced, for hours at a time on his lips, had little or nothing to say on creeds and ceremonies. What were his themes? The love of God, the Divine search, the great salvation, the possibility of life with God. And it is here that Jesus meets us, the deepest of all. His disciples embellished His story with signs and wonders, the things He cared about least of all. "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe." We do not need them to-day any more than did He, for He is Himself the sign. One could wish all our people could learn some foreign language in order to read the Gospel teaching as a new kind of message.

The Life of the Soul

In our mother tongue it flows over us too easily in the well-worn channels. We need to come to it on a fresh road, so as to linger over every word. For those words open depths indeed. Here is a life which reaches down beyond us, down to the centre. "Evidences of Christianity"? Here are the evidences. As we study that teaching, that life, that death, and the Power and Spirit that followed the death, we are looking not only into the depths of ourselves, but to a depth beyond ourselves, down to the Divine hiddenness whence springs the utmost life. This is the deeper Christianity; to survive all changes of form, all advances of thought, the fulness that can fill our emptiness, that can deepen our life down to life's foundations, that for life and death can give us victory.

XV

THE HIGHER CONSCIOUSNESS

ON the theme of man's spiritual relations the twentieth century seems to have broken new ground. We find ourselves at a new starting-point, both in philosophy and theology ; at the opening in both of a fresh route, which may carry us we at present scarcely know whither, except that it will land us in great changes in both spheres. Speaking generally, the old systems, especially the theologic systems, began from above and worked downwards. They began with an absolute, with abstract ideas—with eternity, infinity, with omnipresence and omniscience and omnipotence—and sought to reconcile the actuality, as we encounter it, with these conceptions. To-day in our endeavour to solve the riddle of existence, we are beginning from the other end. We begin with what is here, in us and outside us ; with the concrete fact as it thrusts itself upon us, and from this try to work our way upwards. The tendency in itself is not entirely new. It has been at work for a good while, and in the most diverse minds. It broke out in the eighteenth century, in a crude and destructive form. Diderot's atheism, so-called, was simply an effort to get rid of the intellectual contradictions involved in the then prevalent conceptions of the Absolute. Says he : " The incompatibility of physical and moral evil with the

The Life of the Soul

nature of the Eternal Being evolves itself into this dilemma: it is either impotence or bad will; impotence if He wanted to hinder evil and could not; bad will if He could have hindered and did not will it. It is this that has led people to imagine the fault of the first father of us all, original sin, future rewards and punishments, the Incarnation, immortality, the two principles of the Manichæans, Ormuzd and Ahriman of the Persians, the empire of light and darkness, and other absurdities that have found credit among the different nations of the world."

To call these things absurdities is, of course, very French and very eighteenth century. It is that destructive business which is so easy—as easy as breaking windows. And yet Diderot touches here the weak part of philosophic and theologic absolutism. He voices the very difficulty which to Mill was so confounding; that terrible "either-or" of the world's evil. "Either God is not wholly omnipotent or He is not wholly good." The difficulty is the oldest in the world; but the special note of to-day is, as we have already observed, that on this and all the allied questions we are starting from a new standpoint. We begin at the bottom instead of at the top. We are trying to frame our question as to what is above by first finding out, as far as we can, what is beneath. Before we pronounce on the infinite we are studying our own doorstep and what is immediately around it. We recognise that in this life we shall never get a complete or satisfying view, for a view from beneath upward is as one-sided as a view from above downward. But we have attained the grace of recognising that it is better, and more

The Higher Consciousness

modest for us, instead of dogmatising about an upper view, without ever having been there, to get a clear notion of the landscape about us, where we really are.

Our age, examining its questions from this humbler standpoint, is concentrating its attention on the problem of consciousness. That, of course, is the key to everything else. We can only know our world in proportion as we know ourselves. We are to-day beyond Kant in some things, but we can never forget our obligations to the man who showed us, as it had never been shown before, how largely the world outside is, in its appeal to us, manufactured by the action of our own mind. But to-day we are upon some new questions here. On the subject of consciousness, what it is, and what its implications are, philosophy and theology are shifting their ground. In the latter half of the last century the battle was between the materialists and the idealists. Then the biologists and physiologists, approaching the problem from the outside, made our inner life an affair of the blind cosmic forces, and landed themselves in a materialistic determinism. They were answered, and with good effect, by idealists such as Lotze, Martineau, and Green, who, with a truer instinct, insisted on beginning from the inside ; from what we knew best, namely, ourselves ; and who showed that the very ideas of force and of causality on which their opponents, the naturists, relied, originated in ourselves, and were transferred by us to the world outside ; and who argued further—carrying here the war into the enemy's country—that if mind, energy, allied with free will, were the ultimate facts of existence, as given in consciousness, it was to these,

The Life of the Soul

and not to blind matter, that we must look as our guides for interpreting the outside universe.

In that earlier contest we may say the battle has already been won. Bergson has given the *coup de grâce* to materialism in his exhaustive analysis of the brain and its relation to thought. It is only after a close study of that analysis that we can appreciate the jest with which he sums it up: "That there is," says he, in "Matter and Memory," "a close connection between a state of consciousness and the brain we do not dispute. But there is also a close connection between a coat and the nail on which it hangs . . . Shall we say then that the shape of the nail gives us the shape of the coat, or in any way corresponds to it?" The jest would be almost an impertinence if it stood by itself. After studying his researches into the functions of the brain and the functions of mind, the sarcasm is seen to more than justify itself.

But the contest has now been pushed a step further; on to fresh ground, a ground which opens an immense new outlook for theology. The scientific world is preparing to admit consciousness as, though allied with, yet distinct from, mechanism. But the study of it, in all its forms, has opened up some questions which go deeper than the old controversies. We are asking, Where does consciousness begin; how far does it go; and what do its manifestations show us as to its ultimate source and end? The first question is, as now studied, giving us some surprising results, which offer their own hints as to those other problems. Consciousness begins lower down apparently than we had previously thought. We remember here Haeckel's conjecture

The Higher Consciousness

that feeling, of a sort, begins with the atom—with the sense there of attraction and repulsion. It may be so ; it may be that the earth on which we tread, the solid, immovable mountains, know more than we think. Is the vegetable world a thought-world ? Maeterlinck's investigations, in his "Intelligence of Flowers," offer here some extraordinary suggestions. Says he : "Some flowers, like the lucerne, have invented the Archimedian screw. . . . But these ingenious screws are failures ; they could only act for a certain height ; they are too low to come into action. They are an illustration of Nature's mistakes." On the other hand, he observes : "When shall we succeed in building a parachute or a flying machine as rigid, as subtle, and as safe as that of the dandelion ?" Of vegetable contrivance in general he says : "The different developments of flowers, for impregnation, etc., follow exactly the line of inventions and improvements amongst us. A clumsy contrivance is succeeded by a simpler one. . . . It would really seem as though ideas came to flowers in the same way as to us. The flowers grope in the same darkness, encounter the same obstacles, the same ill will in some unknown. They would appear to possess our patience, our perseverance, our self-love ; the same varied and diversified intelligence, almost the same hopes and the same ideals. They struggle, like ourselves, against a great indifferent force that ends by assisting them."

As we ascend the scale, as we enter the animal world, we see yet closer affinities with our own consciousness. The soul of a beetle is as immaterial as the soul of a man. Ants are enormously clever

The Life of the Soul

people. Lubbock has shown us how they contrive ; how in presence of unexpected obstacles they put their heads together and overcome them by their native wit. A dog has a wide range, not only of intellect, but of morality. It is capable of disinterested love, of jealousy, of hope, of fear, of remorse. In man himself we have a consciousness at the highest range known to our actual experience. We have not only sensations but ideas ; not only percepts but concepts ; not only the concrete but the abstract ; the sense not only of time but eternity ; not simply of the immediate but of infinity. We have not only the pressure of sensation, but the idea of causality, the relation of effects to causes ; the power of after-looking and fore-looking, which traces back from present appearances to their origins and onward to their results ; above all, we have that dominating moral sense which gives to things their inner values, and which proclaims the universe worthless unless it have a moral end.

And it is out of this consciousness, as we see it at work in the lower spheres, and as we find it in ourselves, that we have to frame our idea of that higher consciousness which man everywhere has looked to as the framer and guide of our world. Here it is that the battle of our day is being joined. It is admitted practically everywhere that there is such a higher consciousness. The higher, we feel, did not begin with the lower ; thought could not have originated in no-thought. The stream does not rise above its source. Unintelligent matter could not of itself become intelligent. But where and what is the intelligence that started thought—thought as we find it in the vegetable, if you allow it there ;

The Higher Consciousness

in the animal, and in ourselves? Is it in the direct action upon us of the omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient deity which the earlier thinking has offered us? We come here upon that terrible "either-or" which Diderot and Mill have elaborated for us. We come upon those limitations which Maeterlinck finds in the flowers; upon an intelligence which thinks as we do, and makes mistakes as we do. We come upon the whole question of the world's evils, disasters, catastrophes; upon human sin and misery; upon the cruelty and indifference of Nature, as seen in a San Francisco earthquake, in the fiery blast from Mont Peleé which destroyed St. Pierre, upon that crash on the ice of the *Titanic* which plunged two continents into mourning. What, it is asked, is your higher consciousness doing in all this? Is it an omnipotent all-loving consciousness? Why, then, this history of defeat, this catalogue of woe?

These questions have been pressing upon modern thought with a new intensity, and they have produced some remarkable answers. The late Professor James, of America, has given his, in his doctrine of Pluralism; and Bergson, so far as his constructive thought has gone, suggests a creative evolution which as yet is hardly fully conscious of itself. It would seem as though the modern mind, in its quest for a solution of the enigma, were tending backwards to that Gnosticism of the second century which split the controlling intelligence into a hierarchy of subordinate powers, whose lower ranks only were entrusted with immediate contact with man and his destiny—as though here our apparently newest thought were once more turning out to be of very ancient date, refurbished for the occasion.

The Life of the Soul

What now have we, as Christians, to say to these new developments? We cannot ignore them; they have bitten too deeply into the world's best minds for that. And there is no reason why we should. Indeed, it will not surprise us if the evolution of ideas on this subject leads to a reaffirmation and a further extension of the central Christian doctrine. It seems as though science and philosophy, working from their own standpoints, are about to meet on the New Testament doctrine of a Divine incarnation, a doctrine of it with a wider reach. That doctrine, in Christian theology, has hitherto been restricted to the Person of Christ as a historical figure. What we may now contemplate is the carrying of this doctrine into the whole scheme of creation and of providence. The New Testament speaks of God as, in Christ, "emptying Himself, taking on Him the form of a servant." It teaches a limitation of the Divine, that it may draw near to, and ally itself with humanity. But the considerations we have been enumerating raise the question whether such a self-emptying, such a limitation, have not been carried farther; whether creation itself, the bringing into the existence of beings like ourselves, dowered with intelligence and free will, is not itself a limitation; whether the Infinite One, in fathering such a world, and in guiding it, is not Himself under a *Kenosis*; whether we have not here, in nature and history, to do immediately with a self-limited power and knowledge; a power and knowledge that work as we do by experiment and effort; by partial successes, by mistakes and failures even; working against an outer indifference and even opposition, on the way to a final and victorious good? May it not be that

The Higher Consciousness

there was no other way than this—of humiliation and self-abnegation—of bringing such as we are to the best that is possible for us ; that only in His union with us in failure and disaster lay the road to the perfectibility of our spirits, to our final bliss in oneness with Himself ? May it not be that here, by this way of science and philosophy, we are coming to a greater doctrine of the Cross, as borne by our God from the beginning of His relations with us ; the doctrine of “ the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world ” ; that we have here the key to the mystery of the ages, the mystery of pain and sin, and mistake and death ; have it in the doctrine of One who has stooped from His height to share our imperfection, to travel with us till the end is reached and the limitation is over, till the Kingdom is finally delivered up to the Father, and God is All in All ?

XVI

OF NEW INTERESTS

WHAT is it that makes life a success or a failure ? Does the matter lie in our riches or poverty ; in the position we achieve or fail to achieve in society ; in our health or ill-health ; in the ease or the difficulty of our career ? All these considerations have their weight—a different weight with different people. There is another test, surer and deeper, but one often so strangely overlooked, Has life been interesting ? For that is a success in itself. But out of this arises immediately the question, What is it to be interested ? We cannot stay to elaborate that theme. For working purposes it may suffice to say that an interest is an outward something which congenially appeals to and unites with our inwardness ; which helpfully stirs the soul, and draws it out of itself. We were not made to dwell alone. Left to ourselves, we are a vacuity, a nothing. The life process, over all its range, is a perpetual wedlock, a marrying of the inner to some outer—of the eye with light, of the lungs with air, of the ear with sound, of the mind with its affinities. A carding machine, set to work without the wool it is made to tear, will rack itself to pieces. We are like that. We must have our wool to work upon. But there is a little difference between our machine and that of the factory. That works upon some one special material.

Of New Interests

Ours has for its material all life, all time, all events, all the universe.

Nothing is more wonderful than this capacity of ours for interest ; and the provision which Nature has made for its exercise. The child begins with the marvel of itself, and of its senses. In those first months it is, in its own way, occupied with the vastest problems ; solving as it can the mysteries of time, of space, of motion ; of the relation of its tiny being with the strange world it has come into. Later, it is full of its toys, its games. Every year brings its new interest. As the powers develop the field opens for their exercise. There are constant surprises. Think of what it means to learn to read ? The age of passion opens, a realm of the vastest promises. What immense new interests open with love, with marriage, and parenthood ! Yes, but after ! " After thirty, life is all plain prose," remarked someone once in our hearing. That depends. It is here the battle comes. For now the question will be decided whether life is to be a dull affair or one which grows in zest with every passing day ; and the question will be decided by ourselves. It will be decided by the way we handle things and look at things.

If we are to find a constant interest in life it will have to be on Nature's terms. She is the most royal of givers, but always on conditions. She will not throw her pearls before swine. "*Do ut des*," " I give that you may give," is her motto. And our gift must come early in the transaction. Her condition here is indeed itself one of her best gifts, without which all the others would be useless. Her object is not to smother a passive nature with bounties that would be a mere burden, but to offer in proportion

The Life of the Soul

as we are prepared to receive—and to use. And so to win an interest in things we must work at them. Here is all literature ; but you must first learn to read. Here is the heaven of music ; but you enter by the strait gate of notes and finger exercises. The rule is everywhere, and absolute. In proportion to our doggedness in learning do all the old things of the world become new. A child is interested in worms. It is a genuine interest, and will afford it a certain pleasure. But probably the pleasure will not increase ; rather the other way. Most of us, for the rest of our life, see no beauty in worms. A Darwin comes along and studies these creatures. While society is rushing from theatre to ball-room in the feverish endeavour to keep interested, this man studies his worms. Finally, he writes a book on them, “ The Formation of Vegetable Mould by Worms,” and we find what fascinations are hid in these humble crawlers for a mind that is open to their teaching.

It is when we have learned to learn that our world becomes so interesting. Jeremy Bentham was writing Latin at the age of five, and was already known as “ the philosopher.” From then to eighty-five, when he died, he never ceased his ardour in the pursuit of truth. Says Mill of him : “ He never knew prosperity nor adversity, passion nor satiety. He never had even the experience which sickness gives ; he lived from childhood to the age of eighty-five in boyish health. He knew no dejection, no weariness of heart. He never felt life as a sore and weary burden. He was a boy to the last.” Bentham missed some of the great things, but he knew at least this supreme secret—to work and

Of New Interests

to learn from Nature's "open sesame," with which we open door after door into ever-widening fields of life. Take, too, this sketch of Nasmyth, inventor of the steam hammer, which we get in that charming biography, "Memorials of Susanna and Catherine Winkworth"; "He told us a great deal about his early life; his living for two years on five shillings a week for food, five more for lodging and dress; how, when his wages were raised to fifteen shillings a week, began the 'butter' period, 'and I laid by my first capital besides.' Then he told us about the difficulties of his new monster gun, and his new plans about it. Then he got off on his great moon studies; and he described great geologic eras in the earth's history in quaint, vivid language, more like Mr. Kingsley's than anyone else I know." Here is a man beginning at the very bottom—a capital place to begin at—beginning with the struggle for bread, a struggle in itself so mightily interesting, as most of us know. So far from being beaten by it, he becomes a capitalist on fifteen shillings a week; going on in his learning and his thinking till moons and geologic eras become part of his life. We are not all Nasmyths, but his method is open to us all. Following it we may not perhaps reach his height, but there will not be a dull spot in the road.

There is no way to lasting interests apart from work. We all travel nowadays more or less. The world is a world on wheels. But masses of travellers get the minimum of pleasure out of the maximum of expense. We met a man who was unspeakably bored by the Alps. At the foot of Mont Blanc he sighed for the pleasures of the town. Contrast this attitude with that of a Ruskin, the prepared and

The Life of the Soul

disciplined soul, to whom every fold and undulation of the mountain masses told the story of their formation and purpose; who saw the science and the artistry of every cloud that floated above; to whom every leaf on the tree beside him whispered its secret and laid bare its beauty; and whose infinite knowledge of detail served only to deepen the sacred joy with which the grandeur of the whole affected him. In these scenes we carry away in proportion to what we bring. Once sailing in the Ægean, we lay in view of Salamis and "the mountains that look on Marathon." As we mused over the mighty story the scene recalled, we were accosted by one of the crew, who expressed his wonder at the fuss travellers made over these places, which seemed to him "nothing in particular." Our world is to so many people "nothing in particular." It is because they themselves are nothing in particular. And they might be something if they tried.

When we have worked with Nature; when we have responded to her appeal; when we have cultivated all round the faculty with which she has endowed us of being interested, it is astonishing how free, how elastic, how wholesome, becomes our attitude to life. Its heaviest blows become to us a change of interest. Robert Bruce, the hunted fugitive, watching in his cave a spider at her work, was probably as happily occupied as when he was conquering at Bannockburn. The disaster that breaks in on our enervating comforts and sets us adrift on the world is often the one thing needed to wake up our dormant energies and to discover to us our true selves. We read of the Jerusalem Christians that the persecution which broke out about

Of New Interests

Stephen sent them everywhere preaching the Word. We may be sure that afterwards they would not have missed that experience. As missionaries they found life on so much larger, so much more interesting a scale than as mere hearers and talkers at home. The Pilgrim Fathers lost England to find and found America. Herein is the beneficence of Nature, that in whatsoever new situation she plants us, she provides there for us our store of new interests. The incessant circulation of human fortunes, from down to up, from up to down, from ease to danger, from health to illness ; what is it but her effort to keep us awake ; to fill us with new treasures of thought and feeling ! There is a saying in the North, dealing with the fluctuations of wealth, " that from shirt sleeves to shirt sleeves is an affair of three generations." We may take it as a world arrangement to secure us from that monotony of conditions which destroys initiative and emasculates a people. Sir Thomas More, in his " Utopia," has an arrangement by which at regular intervals the townspeople and the country people change places. In our wilder speculations we have wondered sometimes what would happen if something of that sort took place between our East and our West-end ; if at regular intervals Belgravia migrated to Whitechapel, and Whitechapel to Belgravia ! One end of the experiment would be more hazardous than the other. We doubt whether the East would prosper morally in the West. But Park-lane would learn some admirable lessons from the migration, and gain some interests entirely worth possessing.

And this leads us to what must ever be one of the chief human interests—our interest in people. Our

The Life of the Soul

attitude there will exercise all our morality and all our religion. There is a cult of new interests here which is entirely detestable, that of the pushers, who, as they rise in the world, forget their old friends, knowing henceforth only the people of the circle they have reached. "If you want to climb, cling to the skirts of those above you, and take no notice of those beneath," was the advice given to an aspirant of our acquaintance. There are few who would utter such a cynicism, but there are many who act upon it. Others are interested in both high and low, with the view of profiting by both of them. We think here of Goethe's description of Christianity as the religion of "the third reverence," the reverence for the poor and lowly; the religion of Him whose interest in the multitude lay not in what He could get out of them, but in what He could impart to them. Diderot was not a Christian, but we love that description which Morley gives of him as a friend. "Diderot was content to take friendship as the right, the duty, or the privilege of rendering services without thought of requiring them, or gratitude for them, back in return. No man that ever lived showed more sterling interest in furthering the affairs of others around him. He seemed to admit every claim on his time, his purse, or his talents." There showed the Christian heart, the essentially Christian temper. That temper, as it possesses us, turns instinctively our friendship into a helpfulness. Our reservoir will become foul and stagnant if its waters are held in. It is kept pure by its constant outflow. We anticipate a time when every family of means will, as an affair of its health and salvation, link itself on to some poorer home, or circle of homes, sharing their burdens,

Of New Interests

pouring into them some of its own warmth and cheer. Yet our friendships need not be confined to the poor and the lowly. There is one direction in which, without self-seeking, we may follow the cult of the highest. It is in those ideal friendships, in that fellowship of kindred souls, with which the great literatures furnish us. As we read the biographies of noble souls we are widening our circle of loved ones. Across continents, it may be across ages, our hearts go out to these other hearts. When we reach the page which records their death we mourn, as at a grave. We say to ourselves, "This cannot be a farewell. These lives which have passed hence are there to make heaven richer for us. We will tread the path they trod, to join them by and by."

The great interests, if we faithfully pursue them, become ever new. Take that of faith, of the religious life. As, after a fairly long career, we look back upon its history in ourselves, we are astonished at its developments, its transformations. Throughout it has been the one inspiring principle, our highest, deepest, best. The one, the same, we say, yet never the same. How naïve at the beginning! Some of us began in the narrowest school, and we believed all that was taught there. Religion was something that reached the world in the New Testament time; was then lost for a millennium and a half, till it was rediscovered by Luther. It was encrusted with creeds and doctrines of that Reformation time, which we regarded as inspired. Then the intellect awoke; awoke to history, to science, to literature, to philosophy, to criticism. There was a time when everything seemed to go; when we wandered in the wilderness, in a solitary way, and found no city

The Life of the Soul

to dwell in. We found later, that in all this we were under guidance ; that the new knowledge which had poured in was not for the destruction, but the deliverance, the enrichment of faith. By its means faith had acquired a thousand new interests ; interests in antiquity, in outside peoples, in all the facts of the universe ; it had ceased to be a narrowness which shut us off from the world and our fellows, and had become a sense, a throb of the universal life, a harmony of the soul with all that God had made. Religion from the beginning has been full of surprises, and its greatest are to come.

To conclude and to sum up. The secret of making life successful is to make it interesting. Nature here does her part, but she cannot work without our co-operation. You will never keep up life's interests by a mere receiving ; there must be steady doing. The surface sources are soon exhausted. That exhaustion is Nature's invitation to dig deeper. There you will find an exhaustless supply. Are you bored with the newspapers, with the gossip you hear, with the round of pleasures that have ceased to please ? Why not put your spade into some new ground ? Why not, to name one thing, learn Greek, and read the New Testament in the language in which it was written ? Half an hour a day will give you the language, and with it a joy for ever. Are you retiring from business ? The step will be disastrous unless you exchange the vivid interests you are there leaving for others which are deeper and wider. Each age, each condition, as we reach it, calls for the cultivation of its definite interests. Old age demands here its special effort. You must learn the business of being old. Well

Of New Interests

learned, it will yield richest fruits. It will replace every loss from the earlier time by some new gain of the spirit. Thus prepared, we shall find, when death comes, that it brings its own surpassing interest. An interest of hope and solemn expectation as of a traveller, who, passing through the glooms of a shadowed way, sees openings beyond into a sunnier, a vaster realm.

XVII

OF JUDGMENT

We begin this chapter with a question from an Australian correspondent: "I wish, with several others, that you would give us your views of 'The Judgment Day.' Is it a day of the far-off future, or are we now being judged?" The theme here suggested is, indeed, worth all our study, and the more so as there seems upon it so singular a confusion of ideas. Before we can talk of the Judgment Day, we need first of all to understand what we mean by judgment. What does the word itself carry? As used in our English language it stands for ideas which seem the most remote from each other. We speak of judging a horse, or a prize bullock. We say of a man that he is of "sound judgment." We speak of literary, æsthetic, historical judgments. There are the judgments of our criminal courts. And the same voice which, in the New Testament, depicts for us, the "Judgment Day," gives us the injunction, "Judge not." Can we, in this seemingly disjointed collection of meanings, discover any common principle; anything which unites them, as expressing one and the same thing?

We have got here, we say, an apparent mixture of meanings. In one use our word stands for just a criticism. Our English "critic" and "criticism," it is worth noting, come from the very Greek word which,

Of Judgment

in the New Testament, carries such awful significances. The same word is used for passing an opinion, and for pronouncing a sentence, and decreeing a penalty. That seems a strange thing. Is the law of language in binding together these apparently distinct and separate ideas guilty of an irrelevancy, of a confusion of terms? No; there is no mistake. When we look deeper into the matter, we shall perceive that language here has conformed, in the strictest way, to the law of life. All these meanings hang together. In studying them, we find, put into the clearest light, what judgment is, and what punishment is, and how the one is related to the other. And so, finally, we may get some kind of answer to our correspondent's question, as to whether "the Day of Judgment is in the far-off future, or whether we are now being judged."

What, then, to begin with, *is* judgment? In its simplest form it is a process which is perpetually going on within ourselves. It is a product of perception and of memory; of seeing and recollecting. When I say, "This is a horse," a double process has gone on within me. First my senses have conveyed to me the impression of a given form. I call that form a horse because my memory serves up to me the recollection of other forms, previously seen, to which, from their similarity in shape, movement and character, we have given this common name. And in the expert judge of a horse, the same double process has been carried on, with more exactness. His perception of the animal, of its various features, is at once associated with memories within him, in which these features are recognised as "points," as belonging to a certain order of merit. His judgment is good in

The Life of the Soul

proportion to his quickness of perception, and the wide store of memories to which he can refer, and so compare what he sees in this horse with what he knows of horse-character in general. And the same is true, whether the object of judgment is a horse or a picture, or a statue, or a poem. Always the process is an affair of seeing and remembering, of the proper use of these two faculties. When we come to judgments of opinion, and still more, of character, the same thing happens—with a difference. Here, too, what is seen or heard is referred immediately to our store of memories. To pronounce on a statement that is offered us, we summon immediately all we recollect in reference to it, put it side by side with the newcomer, and see how it compares. So an act, a moral deed, is placed against what lies in us of teaching, of ideal, and is pronounced on accordingly. The difference here between our moral judgments and those of the expert and the artist lies in the fact that the will, almost dormant in the latter, comes in the former into far more decisive action.

Here, then, we have judgment in its simplest, in its original form ; as an act of the mind, proceeding according to the laws of the mind. We have now to ask how it comes to connect itself with those other interpretations, with judgment considered as catastrophe, as punishment ? We have here to pursue the original idea of it one step farther. In that first act of the mind we have performed what is called a classification. We have referred our quadruped to the class of horses ; we say that block of stone belongs to the class of granite. That is to say, this quadruped has the qualities which are common to horses ; this stone the qualities common to granite.

Of Judgment

And they will act, be, and endure according to the qualities of their class. The horse, we know, will breathe, and eat, and sleep and move, and in the end die, in the way of horses. The granite will be of a weight, of a colour, of an endurance according to the way of granite. All the things that happen to them will be according to their qualities, will be the natural, inevitable result of those qualities. And so, when in one of our law courts a jury declares a man to be a murderer, it, too, has performed a classification. It has not made the man a murderer ; it has simply declared, if the verdict be a true one, what is the already existing fact. He *is* that, and it says so. The judge's procedure is yet another classification. His sentence means simply that this man, being a murderer, is in the class that, according to the existing law, is open to certain results. The judge does not make the law. He states its operation on the class in which this man has placed himself. A horse, by being a horse, is exposed to all that commonly happens to horses. A convicted murderer is, in like manner, exposed to what happens to convicted murderers.

Now we begin to see what judgment is and how it is related to punishment. But we have at this point to note a difference between what happens in criminal courts and what happens outside. In our courts, in human society, our penal judgments are not invariable. They have not an immediate, an inevitable relation to the facts. They are often capricious. In minor cases a judge has a large discretion in the sentences he pronounces. And the human codes differ widely in different nations ; in different phases of civilisation. We condemn as

The Life of the Soul

barbarous the English criminal law as it existed in the time of the Georges, a law which sent young girls to the gallows for petty thefts. Outside all is different. There we find a judgment, yes, a criminal court, where there is no caprice, no uncertainty. Here sentence is strictly according to the fact ; is indeed bound up in the fact, and proceeds from it. The law here is that certain causes will produce certain results. And there is no appeal against it. If you put your hand in the fire it will burn you. If you drop from a precipice gravitation will execute its sentence on you at the bottom.

And this law, so manifest in these more brutal instances, works higher up with an equal certainty. Its classifications proceed with an unerring accuracy. They are fully visible in the moral sphere, for all who will look for them. If a man by his acts places himself in the class of rogue, of charlatan, of lecher, the cosmic law will proceed with him accordingly. There are all manner of dodgeries possible in this region of things ; in which clever fellows may seem to hoodwink the universe ; but the universe, in the end, is always too much for them. " God does not pay at the end of every week, but in the end He pays," said Anne of Austria to Richelieu, and it was a true saying. The universe has such a disdainful contempt for rogues. It allows them their pitiful satisfactions ; gives them the run of their swine-trough, but as long as they continue in their rogue-hood, sternly closes against them all its higher possibilities. By no clever trickery can profligacy, can low living, come into the possession of the beatitudes. Carlyle, in his " Life of Frederick," speaking of his early vices, has a prophetic note on

Of Judgment

this theme. " To burn away in mad waste the divine aromas and plainly celestial elements from our existence . . . to make the soul itself hard, impious, barren ! Surely a day is coming when it will be known again what virtue is in purity and continence of life ; how divine is the blush of young human cheeks ; how high, beneficent, sternly inexorable if forgotten, is the duty laid, not on women only, but on every creature, in regard to these particulars ? Well, if such a day never come again, I perceive much else will never come. Magnanimity and depth of insight will never come ; heroic purity of heart and of eye ; noble, pious valour, how can they ever come ? The scandalous bronze-lacker age, of hungry animalisms, spiritual impotences, and mendacities, will have to run its course, till the Pit swallow it."

The ancients knew of this cosmic judgment ; knew it in its grandeur, in its presence at the heart of things. Plato in the " Gorgias " insists that the wrong-doer is far more miserable than the sufferer of the wrong ; is worse off without punishment than with it. The evil deed carries its retribution written in its own essence and quality. When the Hebrew prophets spoke of " days of judgment," coming upon men and upon nations, they followed the strict fact of things. The day of calamity in its swift suddenness is no arbitrary interference. Nature knows those days, in the physical and in the moral world. But there is no caprice about them. They are the outworking of causation's rigidest law. The rush of the avalanche is no single event. With things as they are it could not help being what it is. If we could see the causes at work we should be able to

The Life of the Soul

predict what was coming. The judgments on nations, on institutions, are always of this order. They proceed, mark you, never from the outside but always from the inside ; out of the heart of the facts themselves. Of such days there have been, in the world's later history, not wanting instances. The Reformation was surely such a judgment, a judgment on the existing Romanism ; a judgment, a bringing to light, and to a focus of result, of things as they were ; on the one side the spiritual decay, the moral putrescence at the Vatican ; where, as Villari says, " it seemed as though the papacy desired to extirpate all religious feeling from the mind of man, and to overthrow for ever every basis of morality " ; on the other side the uprising in honest minds of a clear consciousness of this state of things and of revolt against it. Of that event may we not say here with Carlyle, to quote again that prophet of ours : " The most untheological of men may still assert the thing (the Reformation) and take it with more of awe than they are wont, as a correct reading of the will of the Eternal in respect of such matters . . . Protestant or not Protestant ? The question meant everywhere : Is there anything of nobleness in you, O Nation, or is there nothing ? Are there in this nation enough of heroic men to venture forward, and to battle for God's truth against the Devil's falsehood, at the peril of life and more ? . . . Austria, Spain, Italy, France, Poland—the offer of the Reformation, was made everywhere ; and it is curious to see what has become of the nations that would not hear it." He sketches their after-history, as vividest illustration of what did follow upon their refusal.

The French Revolution was another of these

Of Judgment

“days of judgment.” Again it is no outside interference ; it is from within, the direct, inevitable outcome of things as they were, of deeds and of men as they were. Clear-minded observers saw what was coming, what must come. Arthur Young, travelling through France on the eve of the catastrophe, says : “What have kings and ministers and parliaments and states to answer for ; seeing millions of hands that would be industrious idle and starving through the execrable maxims of despotism, or the equally detestable prejudices of a feudal nobility !” The judgment, so terrific as it is when it comes, is yet so entirely natural. There are no miracles here ; no flaming sky appearances. That is not the way of things in this universe. And yet be sure this is heaven’s doing not the less. It is heaven’s proclamation of how things work. “You kings and nobles and priests have been of this character and have acted in this way. Well, this is the outcome of such deeds and such characters !”

Jesus was a proclaimer of judgment, of His judgment. In His recorded statements concerning it He is speaking, as was His wont, in parables. The scenic accompaniments of thrones, and clouds, and angels, and assembled multitudes, are pictures drawn in the manner of His time. But the essence of the thing is here as we find it everywhere. The judgment, as depicted in the Gospels, is a classification. It is a statement of what people are ; of what they have made themselves. “You have been so and so, you have done so and so. That defines what you are ; and just as the horse, by being a horse, has the place and treatment assigned to horses, so you will get your place and treatment according to—what you are.”

The Life of the Soul

That is the essence of it. The universe has no other way of dealing with man or thing than that of putting them into the place to which they belong. That is the inexorable law of all things in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. This judgment is a present one and a future one. "Now is the judgment of this world," says Christ in one place. Elsewhere He puts the judgment in the future. Both statements represent the truth of things. We are now being judged ; for we are now in the place to which our deeds and character have brought us. And the law of "now" is the law of "then." For the future also is a future of judgment.

Observe here that the judgment, as pictured in the Gospels, is a judgment of works. It is according to what you have been and done. There is no mention in it of grace. Is not that a singular thing, worth noting? For the New Testament proclaims, above all things, a Gospel of Grace ; a Gospel of Redemption, of salvation to the chief of sinners. How, then, are we to interpret this anomaly? There is only one way. The seeming contradiction is there to drive us to the great, illuminating fact that the law under which the universe works is in itself a law of grace ; that its meaning, its end, is grace and redemption. The punishment is, as Plato in his "Gorgias" insists, there as curative. The "unquenchable fire" is to burn up the chaff. It is the fire of God's holy love, which burns to utter purification. For God is Love, and in hell or heaven can act only as love, and in the methods of love.

Meantime, the injunction for us, from the same authority, is "Judge not." And that because we are not competent to the business. Is not this

Of Judgment

injunction a gospel in itself ? What else can it mean but that the ultimate pronouncement on our neighbour will be so much wiser, so much tenderer, so much closer to the fact, than any summation of ours ? “ If we knew all we should forgive all,” said Mme. de Staël. And there is only One who knows all ! Concerning our too easy gossip on our neighbour, may we not take that word of Zeno ? “ Nature gave us one tongue but two ears, that we may hear just twice as much as we speak.” And that word also of St. Bernard on fasting : “ Let your ear fast from rumours, praise, slander, gossip, controversy ; and your tongue fast from detraction, murmuring, fault-finding.” God’s judgment is a judgment of Love. Let ours ever fashion itself on that high model.

XVIII

OF LIFE VALUES

WHAT we mean by life values is something different from what we mean by the value of life, though the two are intimately connected. That the latter is a supreme interest was demonstrated, as perhaps never before, by the world-shaking tragedy of the *Titanic*. Had that miracle of science and of luxury gone to the bottom by itself there would have been a sufficiently formidable outcry—chiefly on the Stock Exchange and at Lloyds. But it was not the loss of money, not the finish at a stroke of the great ship, that tore the heart of humanity. It was the thought of those fourteen hundred odd souls that perished with her. And it is noteworthy here, noteworthy as an answer to the notion that our age is given up exclusively to the worship of mammon, that in the estimate of loss the emphasis, in the general consciousness, was put, not on the size of the fortunes of the dead, but on the size of their souls. The world's pity and admiration went out to the heroic captain, who died at his post ; to the crew and passengers, who in the prospect of awful death exhibited the noblest qualities of their race. To lose such men, ah ! what a loss ! And yet it was not even these whose death gave us our deepest sense of impoverishment. That came as we thought of the most richly dowered nature

Of Life Values

of all who disappeared into those icy depths. It was the loss of a plain man, without title, without fortune—who in estimating the value of William Stead thought of his fortune?—it was the loss of this man that hit us most keenly; and why? Because not only those of us who knew him intimately, but because all the world recognised in him a man possessed of the supreme human qualities, the world's best mental and moral force. No. Man when, in moments like these, driven back to his inmost self, recognises, beyond all money values, the value of the best kind of life.

But this leads us to what we want here specially to deal with. Life is the supreme value; but what gives it its value? Ritschl enormously enriched and extended religious thinking by his discussion of what he called value-judgments. And since his time the subject of values has become a first-class theme both of philosophy and theology. We have come to see how the problem of life, its religious dogmas, its social, economical, ethical systems, are all fundamentally affected by this question of value. We ask what is the true idea of value? how has it arisen in man and society; whether there is such a thing as a proper scale of values; and what help this value-consciousness in man affords us in our judgment of God, the world and the future?

As we look into the matter we find that all our values are related to feeling. Things are valuable to us in proportion to the kind and intensity of feeling they excite. In earlier discussions of this subject—notably in Bentham—the feelings referred to were of one order, those of pleasure. We can only keep to that if we extend the idea of pleasure far

The Life of the Soul

beyond that of mere animal sensation ; extend it to include æsthetic, moral and spiritual pleasure, the pleasure not only of the body, but of the inmost soul ; the pleasure which the martyr feels in the flames, where the pain of the tortured body is overborne by that deeper rapture which the spirit feels in the accomplishment of its duty, in its union with the highest. And here arises a scale of values, of higher and lower ones. For every feeling has its own value. The sense of hunger gives its value to food ; animal passions make for the time being their gratification the chief value ; the desire of power gives its price to the means of securing it ; the thirst for revenge in the hour of its dominance will make all else subordinate to the wreaking of it. With the moral development of man we see a higher scale of values emerging ; and nothing gives us better evidence of the divine education of our race than to trace the sure movement here of the human consciousness. We see coming up in man the feeling for beauty, the sense of altruism, of the regard for others ; the sense of justice, of righteousness, the sense of a possible inner perfection, and the desire for it ; and the culmination of all this in the soul's deepest instinct, which leads it to the perception of an All Perfect, in whom beauty and holiness are finally expressed, and the yearning for a union with that All Perfect as the spirit's highest good.

The significant fact here is that all the great philosophies, and all the great religions, if we examine their inner contents, reveal the same movement, the same ascending appreciation of values. You come from the values of sensation to the values of the spirit. Take the idea of beauty. Men first

Of Life Values

grew to it in the study of outward nature. They saw it in the splendours of sea and sky, of green fields, of towering mountains, of the human form. In this last expression it was mingled with baser elements, with lust and passion. And nowhere was this æsthetic sense more often or more deeply commingled with animal instincts than among the Greeks. But amongst them note the ascent. Plato, in the "Symposium," shows how, in the prophetic souls that are the trainers of their fellows, the æsthetic sense moves from the lowest things to the highest. "And the true order of going or being led to the things of love, is to use the beauties of earth as steps along which to mount upwards for the sake of that other beauty; going from one to two, and from two to all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair practices, and from fair practices to fair ideas, until from fair ideas he arrives at the idea of absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is." In the "Laches" he has the same thought as to the beauty of sound and music. Speaking of a man whose words and actions agree, he says: "And such a one I deem to be the true musician, attuned to a fairer harmony than that of the lyre, or any pleasant instrument of music." Beyond the concourse of sweet sounds he discerns a deeper harmony, of which the former is but the image, the sublimer music of the finely attempered soul.

This rise in the scale of values is nowhere more vividly represented, and carries nowhere a deeper significance, than in the development of religions. In the early cults we find the religious values were almost entirely physical. The gods were appealed to as sunshine givers, as rainmakers, as gods of the

The Life of the Soul

harvest, of the battlefield, of the sexual relations, of birth and generation. Polytheism divided the ruling powers into separate personalities having charge over these various departments. The gods were worshipped as helpers of the passions, as the means of satisfying the appetites. That was all that man was then equal to in his religious aspiration. Then came that mighty change, born first in the prophet souls, when religion reached the idea of the moral and spiritual as man's highest good ; when deity was realised as personified Holiness ; when bodily sensation and worldly good were felt to be inferior values as compared with justice and righteousness and love. No history gives us the intimate record of that change, but no greater thing has happened since man began upon this earth.

We have, we say, no detailed record of the origin of these value-judgments. But concerning them our own experience, and the experience of the race, show us two things. A large part of our sense of value, and of the ascending scale of it, is hereditary. We are born into the acquired consciousness of the society to which we belong. We take in our mental atmosphere and grow by it, as we take in the air we breathe. We grow up as civilised beings, and become civilised instead of savage, as part of our natural inheritance. But is that all ? If it were, society would never advance beyond where it is. But society is not static, it is dynamic. Its story is that not of a quiescence, but of an incessant movement, and of a movement upwards. And the ultimate factor of that movement is not society, but the individual. The world goes forward because there comes into elect souls of these communities

Of Life Values

a new light from within, a light which reveals the defects of the state in which they find themselves, its deviations from the perfect way, and under the pressure of which they become reformers, religious founders, it may be martyrs. What in them finds expression in the highest degree, is more or less in us all. It is an essential condition of our growth that we should come to individual decisions on the moral problems of our time : that we should take our stand against society itself where we find its habits and customs inferior to the light within us, a hindrance to our own and our neighbour's spiritual life. We have in this way not only to help conserve the inherited moral values, but to create new ones, to help the universal soul in its struggle for completeness.

In this discussion of life values we come now to a question of capital importance—that of their duration, the relation of them, we may say, to time and to eternity. How time comes in here is illustrated in a very material fashion by the methods of our insurance societies, which, as we know, have an interest of their own in life values. Their whole business is concentrated on the time factor. Their rates of insurance are according to the probable duration of your life. Duration, indeed, is everything in our estimate of values. We have never, in our time, had a more tragic illustration of that than in those last hours of the *Titanic*. There were men on board reputed to be worth millions ; worth millions, and they had a calculable number of minutes to live ! What were the millions worth to them then ? Possessions, it is clear, of any sort, are nothing to us apart from some assurance of their permanence.

The Life of the Soul

And it is precisely because this is so that man, come into his consciousness as a moral and spiritual being, has found the necessity of the doctrine of immortality as a preserver of his highest values. The argument for a life beyond the grave is, in our day, being pushed along various lines. Men bring evidence for it from psychology, from telepathy, from apparitions, from the *séances* of spiritualists. We may take that evidence for what it is worth. The real argument lies elsewhere. All religion, it has been said, is an effort to preserve the continuity of the higher values, and there is truth in the saying. That the best in us, that which gives all the dignity to life, should perish utterly in death, while the mere shell and body of us should go on existing eternally in one form or other, is not only incredible to the reason—it is a reduction of the value of these best things to a vanishing point, which is not less incredible.

And this brings us to another of the relations of time to value. We live from moment to moment. This actual moment where we now are is, in a way, all that we possess. The past has gone and cannot be recalled. The future is not here, and so far as we are concerned, may never be here. Out of that fact arise two totally opposite ideals of life. The sensualist says to himself, "I have this moment; I am not sure of any other. I will take my pleasure in it at all costs and whatever happens. The present is all I know; why should I allow a shadowy future to rob me of my immediate gratification?" At the opposite end of the scale we find a man confronted by a great, a tragic decision. He, too, has his one moment—the moment in which he must decide whether he will sacrifice his life or his honour;

Of Life Values

whether he shall put all he has been taught and felt of loyalty, of duty, into that one moment, or accept instead a long continuity of moments at the price of those fealties? That was the moment which confronted the martyrs of the *Titanic*—the men who put the women and children on board the boats and themselves remained behind to die. It might be argued that their lives, many of them at least, were worth more than those of the people they saved. What they felt was, though perhaps it never came to clear thought in their minds—but what they felt was that the values in them of honour, of chivalry, of readiness for sacrifice, were better worth possessing, though death was the price of them, than the continuance of an earthly life from which those values had been deleted. Here, indeed, was the translation into poor humans of this despised twentieth century, of the truth that blazed once for all from the Cross of Calvary; that love's sacrifice, that love's loyalty to the highest, is the heart of all being, the deep mystery of God. And do we think that such a moment can be the last in the career of those who know it; that there is nought but nothingness beyond it? No. The life-value of that death-moment is a value that will never die.

This belief in the continuity, the deathlessness of the higher values, is, we say, the meaning and the root of all religion. What has come into us here from the spiritual heights beyond us partakes of their immortality. If a further argument for that were needed, it lies here—that the faith in this, and the love and enthusiasm begotten of it, are the great factors in promoting and furthering life, while the opposite—the spirit of negation and of no faith—is

The Life of the Soul

a factor of decline and decay. Goethe, that profound student of life, has put this in his own convincing way: "The most profound, or rather the unique theme of the history of the world, to which all others are subordinate, is the conflict of belief and unbelief. The epochs where faith prevails, under whatever form, are the marked epochs of human history, full of memories which make the heart beat, full of substantial gains for all future times. On the other hand, the epochs of unbelief, no matter what their form, even when they bring for a moment a semblance of glory and success, vanish in the end into insignificance." It is the same world-compassing observation which makes him put into the mouth of Mephistopheles this summing up of his destructive character: "I am he who denies." The value of life lies in the spiritual values which religion has brought into it. They are invisible values, and because invisible they are safe from all that the visible can do against them.

XIX

CO-OPERATION

WE think of co-operation to-day mainly as a phase of industry. We have in mind those Rochdale artisans who, in the middle of last century, struck on the idea of a combination among themselves, a union of their own class for manufacture and distribution—an idea which has since covered the land with prosperous societies and flourishing enterprises. But this trade co-operation is only the particular application of a principle that goes vastly deeper. It is, indeed, the central idea of all life, of the world order. We are only beginning to see the range of it ; the implications that underlie it ; the suggestions it offers on ultimate problems ; the part it has to play in the social organisation of the future. For this principle is rooted in the nature of things ; appears, indeed, to be the explanation of that nature. Followed far enough, it seems to give us our final insight into God and man ; into good and evil ; into authority and freedom ; into the ultimate bases of society. Let us try and follow it in some of these directions.

Co-operation has for its first condition the idea of separateness, of distinction. Its start is in individuality, which it demands shall be clear and complete. It asks that each contributing element shall have, within its own limits, a certain sovereignty of being,

The Life of the Soul

not to be intruded on or coerced by anything outside. You see this, to take a familiar illustration, in musical harmony. Your orchestra does not reach its perfection unless each separate contributor is master in his own line; unless each note has its own independent value. The blending is a blending of full and unrestricted powers. And what obtains in music obtains everywhere. The quality of a ship's construction lies first in the quality of each of its materials. It is not enough that its parts fit accurately into each other; that its lines and proportions are in accord with the architect's plans. Beyond that, it means that every steel plate, every bolt, every mast and spar shall, in itself, reach its highest level of quality; that each contributor to the whole shall be best in itself. And you can get no true combination in the social, the political, the religious—in any order, in fact, where the same idea does not hold. It is only when we have fully grasped this, with all it implies, that we are able to discover how distant we are from finality in these combinations; the blunders we have been making in these various departments of life. It is only then that we can start to put away the old, wrong methods, and commence on the better, the true ones.

To begin here at the very beginning, we have to make up our minds that the unity of the universe is not, and never has been, a unity of sameness, but one of a pre-existing separateness. There has never been a one by itself. We cannot conceive, even, of the the divine nature in that way. The trinitarian has here logic in his contention. Allow the Ultimate Being to be conscious, and you have immediately a multiple. This because there can never be a subject

Co-operation

without an object, a thinker without a thought, a feeling without something that is felt ; affection, or any moral emotion, without some other on whom they can be exercised. Our own life, too, is an inherent, an ultimate multiplicity. We consist of two things, of matter and mind, and no analysis will ever reduce the essential difference between them. Tyndall, in his famous Belfast address, startled the British Association and the orthodox British public by his declaration as to the potentialities of matter. But it was Tyndall who had to confess that " the passage from the physics of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness is inconceivable as the result of mechanics " ; and that " the problem of the connection of body and soul is as insoluble in its modern form as it was in the pre-scientific ages." We know to-day how the brilliant researches of Bergson have confirmed that verdict ; how the study of the structure and functions of the brain, while showing it to be the most marvellous of machines, proves that it is only a machine ; and how the limitations of its relation to consciousness show, also, that we who use it are not machines. The same mental and final doubleness of things is similarly revealed in the connection between matter and life. The two work in a different way, by different laws, and towards a different end. The universe, regarded simply from the side of matter and force, is like a clock that is running down. We see in it a dissipation of energy which, if it continued, would bring everything to a standstill. But side by side with this realm of inert matter, which we cannot conceive of as ever adding to its own quantity, we see another realm which is under no

The Life of the Soul

such limitation. Life, thought, is ever adding to itself ; makes new creations out of a seeming nothing. While matter runs down, vitality mounts up ; adds to its accumulations. In these efforts it uses matter, but its very essence and its everyday working show its nature and destiny to lie elsewhere.

We have then a separation, a doubleness, a multiplicity of things and forces going back to the roots of creation. That is what, in all schemes of life, we have to reckon with. The world system is one of distinct entities, independent in themselves, but made to fit into each other, and by their union making a higher completeness. It is wonderful to note how this system works in man himself, in his own interior economy. His morality, what we call his virtue, comes from the interplay of two things in him ; his appetites and his conscience. He finds in himself, as part of his internal fitting, certain impulses, passions, which urge to action, to expression. He is not responsible for their presence in him. He finds them there, ready made, as much a part of his nature as his limbs or his eyes. Ignorant people, whose ignorance has often been assisted by a crude theology, have been in the habit of regarding these passions as a sort of original sin, the sign of depravity, the "lostness" of human nature. As a matter of fact, they are the groundwork of all man's morality, of all his virtue. Milton saw this. As he finely put it : "Why did He (God) create passions within us, pleasures round about us, but that these, rightly tempered, might be the very ingredients of virtue?" Without great passions, says Vauvenargues, there had been no great heroes. But the passions left to themselves would leave man less than

Co-operation

man. It is here we come, in the human interior, upon our principle of doubleness. For, lodged in the same frame, there lies that other element, the element that the Greeks called *suneidesis*, or conscience, the element of moral judgment, founded in a moral law, the law which says, "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not"; a law which carries in itself its own rewards, its own punishments. From the interplay of these two factors comes morality, comes the formation of character. There would be no chastity apart from a possible unchastity; no generosity, no self-abnegation, apart from a possible selfishness. What we call evil is the background on which we paint our goodness. And, still further, there would have been no true morality unless, in the mutual action of these components, there were perfect freedom of choice. If all were predetermined man would have been a machine. His moral value depends absolutely on his moral freedom.

This interior co-operation, we can see, will reach its perfection in proportion as the two components, the passions, the natural impulses on the one hand, and the moral judgment on the other, reach respectively their full powers, and act on each other in the true way. We get here the guiding principle of that larger co-operation where man acts on his fellow-man, in the sphere both of his mental and his material interests. You will have there no proper co-operation apart from the perfecting of the separate factors, the separate workers, and their interplay on each other in an ordered freedom. See first how this affects the internal interests, the affairs of our mind and soul. Here man has for ages been the victim of an old, bad system which has ignored all the

The Life of the Soul

principles we have been explaining. The system has been that of concentrating knowledge, and the power which knowledge brings, in the hands of a few, and of using that knowledge to exploit the ignorance of the many. The Church has sought to make the authority of a class, of a priesthood, supreme over the mind and the heart of the people. It has imposed upon the laity creeds and dogmas declared to be final, on the acceptance of which depended their eternal salvation. A timid, unquestioning acquiescence, a state, in short, of moral cowardice, was thus made the foundation of character, reducing mankind to a small class of dictators and a huge horde of slaves. On this system Kant has a pungent comment. He says: "Those who get up and say 'Whosoever does not believe all that we tell you will be eternally damned' ought surely to have faith enough to add, 'but if it is not true we ourselves will agree to be eternally damned.' This might convince them that they are after all not so firmly convinced of dogmas that they want to force upon others." All this is the reverse of the true co-operation of mind upon mind. The religion of the future will be a religion which holds as its first principle the freedom of every man to test to the utmost the truth or falsehood of all that is taught him. For just as an engineer is not made by a book of mechanics, or by saying "yes" to all its propositions, but by his own comprehension and mental assent to its proofs, so is a man made religious only to the extent to which his own mind and soul in the exercise of their fullest freedom have yielded assent to the truth offered him.

And what is true of man's spiritual is true also of

Co-operation

his material interests. The Nietzschean idea of human society is for the strong man to rule, very much as an engine-driver rules his engine. We want no spontaneity in the engine. If that piece of machinery were suddenly to become possessed of a will of its own, all sorts of awkward complications would ensue. The engine-idea can only be worked through the absolute acquiescence of the engine, the certainty that it will act in a particular way ; will carry out, not any idea of its own, but the will of the man behind it. The theory is that as it would be a disaster for our machinery to develop ideas of its own, so it is a disaster to permit the masses to do any thinking for themselves. They will be better off, and society will be better off, if the control is left to the superior minds, who can do the best kind of thinking. Let the rulers rule and the people obey.

The argument is plausible, and is probably convincing to Tsardom and autocracy in general. Its flaw is that it neglects the first elements of the problem. The awkward fact here is that the material to be handled is not what the argument demands. For better or worse man is not a machine. While the engine is simply a means to an end, man is an end in himself. He possesses the mind and will which are absent in our engine. And just as our engine is useful because we use it with a full knowledge of its qualities, so man can only be useful when we use him with a full knowledge of *his* qualities. More than that ; as the perfection of the engine lies in the fact of all its elements being of themselves the best obtainable, so the social machine will only do its best work when all the elements of it are of the finest quality. The true social co-operation will be reached

The Life of the Soul

only when every member brings to it of his best, a best which can only be reached under conditions of a disciplined freedom. Disciplined, we say, for when the individual man reaches his best he will understand the value of obedience as much as the value of freedom.

Not dominance and autocracy, whether of the capitalist over labour, or of priesthood and dogmas over the soul, but a free co-operation of minds after truth, of hearts and hands in industry ; this is the goal towards which society is now moving. We are a long way from it yet. We are at present only tuning our instruments. We have no conception of the music that, with a proper conducting, we can make out of each other. Consider, to take one instance only, our existing domestic condition. Our great cities are a waste wilderness of unordered lives. The London suburbs contain endless miles of homes, all shut off and isolated from each other. Our clerk or warehouseman goes off in the morning to his work in the City, leaving his wife to wrestle with the day ; to wrestle with its solitude, with its monotony, with its round of exhausting toil, with the nerve-racking care of children. Her neighbours are as unknown to her as if they dwelt in Africa. The home is self-inclusive ; all its cooking, its heating, its lighting, its service, a separate, unaided affair. The utter wastefulness of that solitary fire, of that solitary cooking apparatus, is the smallest part of the waste ; the real extravagance is in the expenditure of nerve force, the expenditure of cheerfulness, of the body's ease, of the mind's equilibrium, of the force of soul and spirit which all this entails. When is our middle class going to invent the corporate home ; the home which shall

Co-operation

secure privacy and at the same time society; which, with a common kitchen-range, with a common heating and lighting apparatus, with a common service, shall cut down expenditures to a minimum, while raising the quality of the daily menu and the ease of the domestic life to a maximum? Where is the middle class crèche, to which the children can be sent, and be made happy, relieving the overtaxed mother of the heaviest of her strain? Modern society has all sorts of combinations; combinations of political parties for the mutual ousting of each other; combinations of capitalists, combinations of labour. When shall we turn our organising faculties to combinations for the prevention of this miserable domestic waste of nerve and strength and temper; for the promotion of social easement and happiness?

We have touched here only the fringe of our subject, but enough has been said at least to show its dimensions. Co-operation is the key to all things in heaven and upon earth. We see it at work alike in the divine and in the human; in the framing of the universe; in the making of the separate soul; in the framework of industry; in the organising of the social and domestic life. And everywhere its principle is the same—that of the perfecting of the separate parts, and in their true relation to each other. For that perfecting and that true relation the watchword is always an ordered freedom. When we have reached that stage, the stage where each individual part of the organism is at its best, and each is in its true place, then shall we have a state in which the apostolic word shall receive its deepest fulfilment, that “all things work together for good.”

XX

FROM BELOW UP

IN discussing the human problem it is helpful to note how all our experiences work into and help each other. We find light on the most abstruse questions by bringing them back to their primitive starting-points. We are all to-day intent on social progress, on improvement, on getting on, and getting up. The gospel we are after is a gospel of climbing. Well, take climbing, the actual thing, and note what it shows us. The heart of the Alpinist, be he merest amateur or President of the Alpine Club, beats faster as he thinks of it. You start from the bottom, generally in the dark, with a sense of prodigious things to be done, dared, and endured on the way up. One hates the excursionist railways that vulgarise those sacred heights yonder; that make things easy, and, by doing so, ruin all the genuine sensations. You tramp, perhaps, some miles of valley road, the guide's lantern swinging in front, then strike off for the upward movement. Your company tramps along, through a pine forest, maybe; on through miles of uninteresting, barren approach, till at length you are upon slippery rock or gleaming ice. Here the tug begins; the call on your nerve, your training, your endurance. You are now in the upper world, the wonder world, where everything is different from the scene below. You

From Below Up

get by and by the spectacle which no human being should miss, were it seen once only in a life-time. In the eastern blackness a faint flush appears. Then, in succession, flung on the infinite canvas from the brush of the unseen artist, a dream of all magic colours, making the heavens, making the peaks, a transformation scene of unimaginable glory. You look round and on the rock above you strikes a level ray of purest gold. The sun has risen ; the heights salute you with the miracle of a new day. Later you reach your summit and stand to record your sensations. They are an amalgam difficult to analyse, but they are one of an extraordinary richness. There is the sense of immeasurable prospect, of aloofness from all common and petty things ; the breathing of a diviner air. But a part of it which you would on no account have missed is the feeling of the toil of the ascent, of its sudden, unlooked-for hazards, of the calls it has made on all your manhood ; and, not least, of the intense comradeship it has engendered ; of the worth to you of your comrades, of your guides ; a worth having no relation to wealth or position, but solely to their strength, their courage, their qualities of limb and head and heart. To have got there without effort, to have reached the peak by machinery ! Certainly you have reached there, and have seen things. But the climber knows that the climb is the thing. It has given him a taste, a flavour of life which no machinery can furnish.

We have here an elementary life experience ; one of sheer, immediate fact and feeling, which offers us lessons for regions a long way removed from the Alps. Society itself, as we see it to-day, may be described as an Alpine country. It is a region of

The Life of the Soul

heights and depths, and where all of us are occupied in the business of climbing—or of watching other people climb. Some of us are up ; a great many of us are down. Of the former there are people who start at the top, who seem, in a way, fixed there. But the vast majority are on the lower levels ; and numbers of them appear, in their turn, to be fixed in that position. They turn their eyes, aflame with envy and desire, to those shining heights above and curse the destiny which keeps them in the plain. But throughout the whole of the thickly-peopled territory there is an incessant movement. All have the instinct of change, the desire to get away from the point where they are to something which seems better. Those who are lower down want to get higher up ; those who are on the supposed heights are, in another way, equally discontented. They also want something better. The primal instinct here is undoubtedly a right one, but there are the gravest of doubts as to the modes of following it. It is good to be climbers ; but we have first to make sure that we are after the right peak ! The question here is one that involves the whole organisation of society ; is one as to whether, in order that we may each for ourselves reach the real fulness of life, we shall not have radically to change the entire system under which our present positions are assigned.

If the object of life is to obtain completeness of being ; to enrich it with the fullest experiences, to become as powerful, as mutually serviceable, as inwardly blessed, as the conditions which Nature offers us make possible, then it is certain that our present social laws and conventions are, to this end, a hindrance rather than a help. No one of our

From Below Up

classes, as at present organised, is getting the best out of life. Consider first the condition of what are called our "upper ten"; the people born to titles, to riches, to great inheritances which they have had no share in winning. The first thing that strikes us here is that these people are under a great human deprivation. They are at the top without climbing; of that tourist class, we may say, who are brought to their summit by machinery. They are there, but they have missed the joy of movement, all the fun, the discipline, the daring, the output of nerve and muscle that the real climb brings. Fancy starting on a peak where, if your legs are to swing at all, they must carry you downwards! To begin at the top, indeed, inverts the whole process of natural movement; of the body's movement, and of the mind's. And so we find the average mental condition of the so-called upper classes an unwholesome one. The morality of it is topsy-turvy, one may say ridiculous. The values are upside down. Here are people who do nothing, looking down on the people who do things; those who have contributed nothing to society, who do not earn their own bread, regarding the contributors, the toilers, as inferior, to whom it is a condescension to speak. It is not all of this class who act thus; there are noble souls of them who act and think in quite another way. And the offenders themselves are not individually to be too greatly blamed. Their attitude is not one of malice prepense. It is the habit bred of a false position; it is a part of the moral deprivation to which their condition has doomed them.

These people, contrary to the general idea, are really amongst the unprivileged. They have not had

The Life of the Soul

their chance : neither their chance of usefulness, nor their chance of enjoyment. The newspapers tell us of some young heir acceding to a fortune of £100,000 a year. Imagine the position ! He has nothing to work for ; for the highest pecuniary rewards of work are there for him already. The roads of art, of science, of learning, of industry lie open ; all roads full of interest, of opportunities for developing a man's powers. Will he follow any of these ? Why should he ? How entirely unnecessary, how far beneath him ! Instead there open to him the pleasures which money buys ; pleasures of the palate, of the wine cup, of the gaming-table, of all the vices in their most luxurious and enticing forms. Our youth, unless he is of more than common stuff, will follow the line of least resistance ; will " sow his wild oats " ; will run through his years of dissipation, to find himself, before life is well begun, if not bankrupt in fortune, assuredly beggared of the finer enthusiasms ; a world-worn cynic, for whom the ordinary pleasures have lost their flavour, to whom existence is at best, as Voltaire put it, "*une mauvaise plaisanterie*." It is really a pitiable spectacle. Our young fellow has not had his chance. Our social order, or rather disorder, has made it next to impossible for him to taste life's real worth, its true success.

One might put the matter into terms of arithmetic. Let us take £100,000, and calculate the amount of enjoyment to be got out of it. Let us suppose three men who in the course of their career have had that amount in possession. One begins with it ; begins thus, as we say, at the top. And he begins by spending, without earning ; by spending lavishly

From Below Up

beyond his income. The process continues, and he becomes more and more impoverished, until at the end he finds it all gone, and his days close in poverty and want. Our second man begins also with that sum in possession. He is more careful than the first, and keeps within his income, so that, at the end, the sum remains undiminished. The third—and we have known such—begins with nothing ; nothing but his character, his industry, his ability. Exercising these he works on from point to point, first with small successes, and then larger ones, increasing year by year the sphere of his gains, of his interests, and dies finally in possession of the sum we have named. It is, for all of them, the same figure, but can you calculate the difference in life's experiences, in solid enjoyment, in the evolution of values that it stands for in the three careers ? The first story ; how utterly miserable ! It begins with luxuries which become necessities ; they lose their power of producing pleasure, but their absence causes acute pain. The man's progress is downward from the light into ever-deepening gloom. The second has a better time ; but how far from the best ! He has tramped a level, beaten road, but has known none of the joy of climbing. It is the third man to whom the life more abundant has been given. For to him has been vouchsafed, not only the summit, but the climb. The lowly beginning in the dark was, of all his fortune, the best fortune. It made every fresh step something better than before. It secured that all which came after should have its own special relish. Each day's meal of life found him with unimpaired appetite, and his zest remains fresh to the end.

Our illustration may seem a shockingly material-

The Life of the Soul

istic one. "As if money, the getting or spending of it, were the one thing in life!" Assuredly that is not what we mean, or what we think. But ours is a materialistic age; one in which, for the best of us, money counts for a good deal. We use the illustration, not by any means as covering the question of true living, but simply to show, in a way which everybody understands and which none can gainsay, how the present order of society, on the very money basis on which it is founded, cheats its supposedly most favoured sons of the best part of life's inheritance.

If this is the way in which our present system affects the "favoured classes," the people who are up, what, we next ask, is its effect upon those who are down? We have said that the supreme defect of our existing social state, as it relates to the upper stratum, is that it shuts them off from life's best chance, that of climbing. But that is also exactly what it does for that vast majority of the race, the people below. Our condition is static where it ought to be dynamic. Its watchword is rigidity, whereas the very life of life consists in movement. To begin at the bottom is ideal, provided only that you do not stay there. The mischief is that our "bottomers" for the most part do stay there, and with no prospect of rising. They are kept there by a thousand things; by their own weakness and insufficiency, by the lack of good guides, by conventional restrictions, by the dead weight pressure of the classes above. This state of affairs is, we see, breeding down below a huge and dangerous discontent. It is a condition which cannot continue. The question is whether the change that is coming is to

From Below Up

be one of volcanic upheaval, or such a reconstruction as shall restore to both classes their chance ; a chance such as will on both sides set the cramped, inactive limbs once more in motion ; as shall enable both upper and lower to taste life's full experience, its full expansion ; as shall make the valley and the height accessible to all.

The choice is now being offered us, and we can take which we prefer. The position to-day in England is not altogether unlike that of France under the old *régime*. We have a similar gulf between the upper and lower, and a similar condition of feeling between them. The old French noblesse, who looked *de haut en bas* upon the "*canaille*" beneath, who extorted to the utmost ounce their privileges, who flaunted their splendours over against the misery of the country peasant, the squalor of the Quartier St. Antoine ; have they not their parallel in our "idle rich" who exhibit their sybarite luxury, their pampered ostentation, in full view of the labourer who toils and starves on his pound a week ? We know what the end was of the French situation ; how the sneer of the noble was met by the *à bas les aristocrats* of the populace ; how in a flash the social values changed places, making "nobility" execrate and infamous, and labour and poverty the only passport to safety ; how, in fine, the storm broke which swept away the whole upper world in a whirlwind of ruin. We say the English temperament, the English religiousness is against all that. Let us not be too sure. Human nature is a queer thing. There are explosive gases in it which, heated to a certain point, burst into flame, and make havoc of temperaments, havoc of everything that is within

The Life of the Soul

reach. And that heating process is going on among us just now at a rate which is getting beyond our registering apparatus.

It is time we considered that other method ; the method of a sane reconstruction, of a return to the primitive, the eternal conditions of human well-being. We cannot here discuss details ; they will arrange themselves as the development goes on. But the radical principle of it all is that every one of us, every individual unit of the social system, should begin at the true place of beginning, at the bottom ; —at the bottom, with every opportunity of moving up. A new idea must pervade society, the idea that every soul of us, in whatever position we are born, should begin life with labour, with discipline, with the bearing of burdens, with the enduring of hardness. Our educational methods, our industrial systems, our society ideals, must be reconstructed in a way that shall secure to the rich man's son all the lessons that labour, yes, the roughest, hardest labour, can teach him, that shall make him one with his fellow in the comradeship of industry, that shall save him from the dreariness, the withering blight of an aimless existence ; and that shall open to the poor man a sure road to those heights which hitherto have been shut from him, the heights of refinement, of responsibility, of the noblest satisfactions.

A reconstruction of this sort will involve a radical change, both for rich and poor, in the idea of what is " up " and what is " down." Where all are workers there will be no longer any stigma upon labour. The stigma will be upon idleness. The social code will be here like that which Ignatius Loyola imposed upon his followers, where the same man was expected

From Below Up

to be equally ready to teach mathematics at the university, or, if need were, to clean shoes in the kitchen. To be "up" will no longer be to occupy a position for pampering diseased appetites, for indulging the childish vanity of display. It will be to have reached the point in which the soul, master of itself and of its world, reaches the inmost meaning of life, and tastes the unfailing joys of purity, of knowledge, and of power.

From below up. That is the only enduring social method, because it has been through all ages the divine method. God's rule and education of this world is on that line of things. His creation of it and His redemption of it have been by a kenosis, an emptying of Himself. We think of Him as the transcendent who has become immanent; whose life has entered into the lowliest forms, and through them has wrought Himself into ever fuller expression; who has become one with life in all its striving, in all its defeats, with all its slow movement to victory. And the method of His creation is the method of His redemption. Here too He comes, not with pomp of royalty, but in the form of a servant made in the likeness of men, in the likeness of humble, labouring men. Science and the New Testament speak here the one language. Together they form the one and only basis of the true social life.

XXI

LIFE'S MUSIC

MAN will never become a materialist so long as his harp and his viol are left to him. He can never deny his relation to a spiritual world while so ethereal a thing as music is here to keep him company. Music is so plainly of two worlds, a mediator between them. It touches matter; it touches spirit, and each vibrates to the contact. Note the two things and their relation here. On the one side you have the collection of sounds, the product of vibrations in the air; sounds, with their marvellous harmonic relations, their connection with number, with mathematics, with the qualities of metals and strings; all this for the material side. But there is the other; that of the soul's response. How has this come about? How is it that you have this common language, appealing at once to the universal heart; that leaps across all the tongues, all the dialects with which the human family has confused itself, and tells its own story to every listening soul? Why is it that these vibrations, movements of the impalpable air, breaking on the tympanum, on a nerve, stir in us all that is exalted, mystical, religious? Religious we say; for all religion is in music. It had been as well, perhaps, for the faith of the world, if it had never been spoken, but only sung. All that is highest and deepest in religion; all that it strives to express;

Life's Music

its vision, its aspiration, its sense of the utterly beautiful, of the utterly holy, comes to us along this road as on no other. Here we have no arguments against, no answering scepticism; we hear, we believe, we adore. We talk to-day of ministering angels as though that were some legend of old. In music we have an angel, not shaped for us in bodily form, but something beyond ourselves, that waits on our spirit, that whispers our relationship to a harmony that is behind and beyond all ages and all worlds.

One of the thousand marvels of music is in its union with other things; with things that, at first sight, seem so dis-similar. It is, we say, on its physical side, a vibration. We are told that the number of vibrations of the string which gives out, on a piano, the sound of middle C is 270 per second. The number of vibrations of the middle or F line of the light scale is reckoned in uncountable billions. But the wonder here is not in these numbers, but—have you thought of it?—that one movement of our ether envelope should give us what we call sight, and another this absolutely different sensation we call sound. Two worlds, utterly remote from each other, shut up in the same atom, opening themselves on two nerves of our brain! But sound, shut off in this way from sight, has deep alliances with it, as with all other things. Particles of matter, under the influence of rhythmical sounds, will arrange themselves in symmetrical forms. Here under our eyes is reproduced the truth of the ancient fable, of creation coming as a form of harmony; of the spheres in their everlasting dance, moving to an inner world music. One thinks here of the theory which Fechner

The Life of the Soul

develops with such subtlety and depth of observation ; of our earth as having a conscious soul, and the rushing streams, the booming tides, the songs of birds, the crash of thunderstorms, as the music to which it listens.

Assuredly it is by a true instinct that we carry the idea of harmony beyond that of the concourse of sweet sounds. We know a music that the ear does not catch. The deepest, divinest element in it is something outside the range of notes and scales. These are only one form of a deeper principle. For life has its harmonies, also its dissonances which no instrument can express for us. Yet the principles of the one are essentially the principles of the other. They are mystically allied. Your Broadwood stands there in your drawing-room, with its row of eighty-five black and white keys. It is your sound factory—which you may handle in such different ways ! A child, a savage, shall dump their hands on it, producing wild, inharmonious crashes. Your learner may wring from it his indifferent performance. Now let your true interpreter come, your Chopin, your Rubinstein. They are the same notes, with no change in their nature, no augmentation of their inherent power, and yet how changed is your piano ! It is now as if all the heavens were singing to you.

Transfer all this to that larger keyboard ; that on which we are all playing, the keyboard of life. Here again it is an affair of the instrument, and of the kind of player. For the world we are in to-day, with all the facts of it ; the facts of our birth and station ; of our sex ; of our strength or weakness ; of our possessions or lack of them ; the whole range, in short, of our circumstances—what is this but our larger

Life's Music

Broadwood, on which we are bidden to make such music as we can? "Ah!" you say, "what a different instrument, what a different business! It is no Broadwood this, not nearly so easy to play. In that you have some assurance of what the keys and strings will do; they are there to make music, and their effects are calculable. But this vastness which surrounds me; this cruel world set up against my solitary self, so much of it unknown, so much seemingly hostile; is there any comparison between my task and that of your skilled artist, who knows exactly the response each key will make to his touch?"

A just contention, but one which, rightly viewed, should surely stimulate rather than depress us. That we are set down before an instrument of this sort; not a keyboard of limited notes and powers, but an organ whose dimensions, whose capacities are those of life itself, of the whole universe, and bid to play on that; have we not here the highest compliment that ever has been or can be paid to us? For the trust here reposed in us is not simply that of playing our organ. It is that first of attuning it, of getting it into order, in a way even of constructing it. What are offered us are rather the materials than the perfected instrument. We are first to shape them, to draw out their harmonic possibilities, to bring them to their point of expression. That has been the task of our race as a whole rather than of the individual. The business of the ages has been to find out one after another the qualities of its organ; and with every discovery life has become for us all a richer music. But there remains for each one the individual task. We, separately, are at the keyboard, and the question

The Life of the Soul

is, What kind of music are we making? Shall we quarrel with our organ; dash our hands on its keys with a gesture of despair, calling it badly constructed, badly arranged? Shall we reproduce all the old tricks of the earlier scholars; tricks of idleness, of flat disobedience, of defiance of the rules? There are a hundred ways of being bad musicians. There is only one way of being a good one. Ah! Why not catch the spirit of the great task! Why not see that here, for us, once in the great eternities, has come our chance, to sit before this sublimest of all instruments, that we may extract from it our separate note, a note counted worthy to mingle with, to enrich, the chorus of immortal life!

In this connection let us think of another keyboard, more restricted, more definitely before us, but where the handling will make all the difference for ourselves and others. Our home life, where our closest relations lie, where life runs at its deepest and fullest, is the arena where are tried the greatest issues of our success or failure. And people fail so often here because they miss the fact that their part in the home circle is above all that of the musician. Wife, husband, brother, son; they are here before us in many capacities. What we need always to remember is that they are, first and last, musical instruments, and that our business with them is to extract their true music by a proper handling of the keys. All the jangles, all the bitternesses that ruin so many homes and spoil so many souls, are, if we would only see it, the result of bad playing on the part of somebody. There are temperaments more difficult than others; but is there one we ever encountered that does not contain notes that, rightly

Life's Music

touched, respond always and sound true always ? Your disagreement yesterday, have you analysed it ? Did it not come from a disregard on your part of all you know of the instrument you were dealing with ? Was not your word or action a mere crash on the keys, without any attempt to find the right combination ? The real music lessons for our household life are not five-finger exercises, daily piano-strummings. They are the practice of a nobler art on a nobler instrument. They are the study of the harmonic possibilities of each nature there in contact with us, and the training of our mind and of our touch to draw them to their fullest expression. And the harmonic result here, if we are ambitious in this business, will be not simply the production of the simpler airs of domestic peace and agreement, delectable as these are. Can we not also search for and train the loftier notes that there are in each soul ; set them quivering in response to the best in our own ; and thus make out of the home intercourse, a symphony of the loftiest music of the soul ?

The principles which hold in the family life are good also for the wider combinations of modern society. Here is a vaster instrument than that of the home. It is an affair of a great multitude of performers, of very varying degrees of proficiency, and, alas ! at present with a clash of disagreeing conductors. We are full to-day of the social unrest. Capital and labour are arrayed in two armies of apparently opposing interests. Their present condition is one where open war in the way of strikes and lock-outs alternates with periods of preparation for war. Each camp has its war chest, its staff of leaders, its arsenals, its weapons of offence and defence. When active hostilities are suspended we are aware of plottings, of

The Life of the Soul

arrangements going on beneath the surface, for a more desperate campaign in the future. And yet every sane mind knows that this is all wrong. Society was made not for discord but for harmony. The present position is an ignorance—one might say a wilful ignorance—of what we may call life's orchestral principle. Your concert cannot be a concert so long as you have two rival conductors. There will be no music here so long as you have two inimical interests waving separate batons. We shall get our concert, noble and refreshing for both performers and audience, when those interests are fused into one, when the instruments speak under a single direction. The way to that fusion is clear before us. Robert Owen pointed it out a hundred years ago. Said a Leeds mill-owner to him once: "If my people avoided waste I could save £4,000 a year." Owen replied: "Give them £2,000 of that, and you will do it; and you will be £2,000 a year richer." That is the whole secret. Give the workers a share in the profits of their industry, and the two armies are one; the clash of rival conductors is over, and the real concert begins. The music here is not simply that of the tinkling of coin, an excellent music in its way, especially where it is heard in aforetime empty pockets. It is a music also of a new joy in work, of a new interest which makes each hour spent in the mill, each stroke of the tool, full of a happier consciousness; music of a heart-warming union between the capitalist, the brain worker in his office, and the hand worker at the loom, co-operators now for one end, for their common good. How long will capital and labour be in learning this lesson? Is it not time the nation, by some collective act, hastened the

Life's Music

business? We have had enough of our jarring discords. We have been, so far, playing monkey tricks with our organ. It is time we began to strike out the noble music that is in it.

The principle which is good for the home and good for the nation; which, in fact, is the only one for them, is good also for the world, the only one for it. The "Concert of Europe," the "Federation of Mankind," are at present only words. That they have got into words, have come so far as articulate expression, is, indeed, something, presage of what is coming. But we need to hasten the process. We are still under the shadow of possible wars. History so far has been a series of huge discords; and that phase has not yet ended. Consider what a battle is. The opposing armies are in themselves a beautiful harmony. The men march together in a rhythmic movement. Their manœuvres are part of a great theme. From the commander-in-chief to the drummer-boy they form part of a vital organism, each portion of which occupies its appointed position, contributes its share to the majesty of the whole. But all these glittering evolutions, this ordered sweep of flowing squadrons, carried on to martial strains that stir the heart, are for what? The two forces meet, and there is an end of harmony, the negation and destruction of it. What follows is chaos let loose. Hours of hideous uproar, a welter of blood, in which bodies, torn by shot and shell, are broken from the human image into hideous, ghastly shapes of ruin; in which minds loose their sanity, turned into hells of raging passion. In the end come victory and defeat—victory, which has turned one

The Life of the Soul

side into an army of demons, maddened with the blood lust ; defeat, which in the other has broken all its beauty of array, destroyed its discipline, turned its serried battalions into a mob of fleeing, cursing, despairing men. Surely in this twentieth century we can do something better with human souls and bodies than that ? Something better with human courage, with the human faculty of organising, of ordered movement ? If these two armies had been working together, instead of against each other ; had been using all these qualities of hardy strength, of trained intelligence against the foes of both, against the ills that encompass life, that were a saner sort of battle ! In the fight against want, against disease, against ignorance, the fight to enlarge the human boundary, to widen its horizon, to lift its status, there is no breach of harmony. Every stroke is a musical one ; the union of effort is the noblest of orchestrations.

Let us end with the root principle of all. The soul's music derives from a divine musician. It finds its true note only in a conscious union of itself with that Other. Beginning there it realises a growing harmony within and without ; within, in the concord of its own powers ; without, in a happy fellowship with its fellows, with all things that live and move. To know it is to possess the secret of which Keble sings :

There are in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of th' everlasting chime ;
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat.

XXII

AMALGAMS IN RELIGION

OUR starting point shall be a letter from an American correspondent who has spent over twenty years in Japan. It concerns a suggestion by the Minister there for Home Affairs, of a union in their country of the accepted religions, Buddhism and Shintoism, with Christianity as a combined national faith. The proposition has since been withdrawn, but the terms of the document are sufficiently interesting. It advises the old religions to "occidentalise themselves"; while as to Christianity, it should "discard the policy of confining itself to a certain sphere, as if it were a sort of colony in a foreign country, and aim at greater success by adapting itself to our national constitution, and being careful to harmonise itself with the popular sentiments and customs."

The manifesto, even in its cancelled condition, is suggestive of much. Before dealing with it, we may add a little from our correspondent's letter. He says: "Things have come to such a pass in Japan that the authorities are now turning to any religion that will help them out. They tried to make a religion out of that old worship of ancestors in general, and the Emperor in particular; but the youth of the land found in this neither restraint nor inspiration; while Socialists and even Anarchists came to question the source of authority. Again they tried to revive

The Life of the Soul

the old ceremonies at the thousands of village shrines, but the city folk were unaffected thereby." And now we see the authorities turning to Christianity duly modified and reconciled with the land's immemorial customs, as a means of arresting the nation's swift moral decline.

It is a spectacle of the profoundest interest. In all external and material things Japan has shown a unique power of assimilation. With an incredible quickness it has absorbed our science and our arts. It has armed itself with the latest European weapons, and has shown how to use them. Its cotton looms are competing with our own. It builds warships whose armaments are of the latest type, and handles them with consummate skill. It has shown itself a foremost fighting power, and is rapidly becoming a foremost manufacturing one. But, as its Government is now finding out, a nation cannot live by material things, however astonishing its progress in them. The conspicuous and terrifying feature of Japanese life to-day is its growing moral corruption. The old faiths, on which the spiritual side of the nation has been nourished, have lost their authority, and there is at present nothing to take their place. The younger generation has become frankly and aggressively materialistic. Its students read Herbert Spencer and Nietzsche. The decay of faith has resulted in an orgy of vice and sensualism. Material interests are pursued with a ruthless disregard of humanity. In the factories and workshops child labour is carried on with a cruelty beyond that of the worst days before our Factory Acts. Japan, in view of its rulers and its best thinkers, is hurrying towards an abyss from which nothing can save it,

Amalgams in Religion

except a revival of true religion, a revival of the sense of spiritual values.

What has Christianity to say to all this? It is invited to come in and bear a hand—under conditions? Can it comply with these conditions? Can it compromise to any extent with the old faiths, with the old customs? Well, it has shown in its long history a most extraordinary power of assimilation. Newman, in a passage of his "Essay on Development," speaking of the early Catholicism in its contact with the heathen world, says: "Temples, incense, lamps, and candles, votive offerings, holy water, asylums, holy days and seasons, processions, blessings on the fields, vestments, tonsure, the ring in marriage, turning to the East, images and the Kyrie eleison, are all of Pagan origin, and sanctified by their adoption into the Church." Pope Gregory the Great, in his letter to the English missionaries, gives the rationale of the process. "Let them," he says, "hang garlands round their temples, turned into churches, and let them celebrate such festivals with modest repasts. Instead of immolating animals to demons, let them kill such animals and eat them. . . so that, by allowing them such material pleasures, they may the more easily be brought to share in spiritual joys. For it is impossible to expect savage minds to give up all their customs at once." It is not difficult to guess what Gregory would do in Japan, were he there to see.

Christianity, indeed, has been the greatest of absorbents. It has received hardly less lavishly than it has given. Some of its most sacred ceremonies are importations. When in the second century, in Justin Martyr and in Irenæus, we read

The Life of the Soul

of the sacrament as a partaking of bread and wine which are transformed in the receiver into a divine life for the soul, a veritable "seed of immortality"; and when we inquire where these ideas came from, we are irresistibly reminded of those Eleusinian mysteries which had entered so profoundly into the mind of the ancient world; mysteries in which baptism and the partaking of consecrated bread and wine were celebrated as a form of union with God. We go farther back than this. The doctrine of the Logos which forms that magnificent prologue to the Fourth Gospel, is essentially a Greek doctrine. Philo Judæus, the Hellenised Jew who made it the basis of his teaching, had borrowed it from Greece. Was it not old Heraclitus who said: "Although the Logos is common to all, the majority of men live as though they had an understanding of their own"? His doctrine is that the true man is enlightened not of himself, but by the Logos, the manifested Reason, the inner light of the soul. The borrowings indeed were in all directions. Says Professor Barker in his "Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle": "The Church Fathers borrowed the political theory of the Stoics—its conception of a universal communion, a natural law, and the equality of all men before that law."

The amalgam which the Japanese Minister proposes for Japan has, we see, to a quite marvellous extent, already been accomplished in Christianity. The Church is already a union of apparent opposites. It has in its history illustrated the old Stoic adage: *Omnia tendunt ad unum*. It has absorbed the most seemingly incongruous elements. We have noticed some of these, but not nearly all. What

Amalgams in Religion

intrinsic relation is there between Christianity and architecture, or music or painting, or the sciences? Yet, when with Ruskin in our hand we go into St. Mark's at Venice, or when we listen to Handel's *Messiah*, or stand before Van Eyck's "Adoration of the Lamb," or Da Vinci's "Last Supper," we see that the building, the music, the pictures, are just full of Christianity. It is like the poker in the fire. The poker has entered into the fire, and the fire into the poker. The sciences have arisen outside of Christianity, have often been in bitterest opposition to it. But as surely as it has been with the arts, so will it be with the sciences. Their *rapprochement* is already a fact; their fusion is only a question of time. Science has changed, is changing the existing Christianity; Christianity is changing the existing science. The two will blend ultimately in an amalgam which will give the world all the inspirations of faith, and all the certainty which comes from loyalty to fact. And Japan, the foremost nation of the East, will assuredly contribute to that result. Lafcadio Hearn, who spent so much of his life in that country, has a discouraging utterance here. Says he: "As the Oriental thinks naturally to the left when we think to the right, the more you cultivate him the more strongly will he think in the opposite direction to you." We doubt it; at the utmost the saying is only very partially true. Japan, for instance, has not in many most important matters been thinking in the opposite direction from us. She has not thought so in all the material sciences. There, what has been true to us has been true to it. It thinks in the same way about mathematics and shipbuilding and manufacture. The foundations

The Life of the Soul

of its logic are the foundations of our logic. And its sense of the ultimate moral values is the same, whatever variation there may be in its applications. It believes passionately in our science; will it not come also to believe in our religion? That the East does not think always in the contrary direction to the West is proved surely by the fact that the West has accepted a faith which came from the East. But the Christianity which is to win in Japan will have to be, through and through, a scientific Christianity. Japan will reject a great deal of our old theologies. It has none of the prejudices which have fostered and protected them in our own minds. Here the East which has accepted the science of the West, will react upon our own faith in insisting upon a scientific basis for all it is going to believe. Singular interchange! The East, which gave us our religion, will, in accepting, be one of the most effective instruments in its reformation, its purification.

So much for Japan, and for the East. But our theme has some home and some interior applications on which, in closing, a word has to be said. Christendom is at present split up into scores of separate organisations, some at smaller, some at vastly greater distances apart. But there are amalgams coming here. The Stoic law, "All things tend to unity," is, in these regions, very visibly at work. The Protestant bodies are all busy with schemes of coalescence. They are already one at heart. And in the heart of Catholicism a movement has arisen which portends prodigious results. The new Catholicism, of which the late Father Tyrrell in England, Loisy in France, Murri in Italy, are representatives, is for the present under the cloud of

Amalgams in Religion

Rome's authority and repressive measures. But it cannot be put down. Time and all the forces of the human mind are on its side. And this movement, which stands for the rights of science, of the human reason, is an alliance with Protestantism in all the deepest things for which it stands ; for the rights of research, for the acceptance of critical findings, for the freedom of heart and mind. Here Goethe shows himself the prophet. Says he : " The better we Protestants advance in our noble development, so much the more rapidly will the Catholics follow us. As soon as they feel themselves caught up by the ever-spreading enlightenment of time, they must go on, do what they will, till at last the point is reached where all is but one."

Religion is finally, in its essence, the greatest of all amalgams, the amalgam of the soul with God. Christian theology has for centuries occupied itself with the nature of Christ. At Nicæa and Ephesus and Chalcedon it formulated doctrinal definitions with the object of declaring His essential oneness with the Father. He was " homoousios," of like nature with the Father. We may accept the definition. But can we not go further ? Does Christ leave us when He becomes divine ? Or is He not the proof that because He is divine we are also ? Was Plotinus wrong when he applies this very term " homoousios " as a designation of the human soul ; declares that it, too, is " of like nature with God " ? Christ were not the perfection of humanity, at once its archetype and its finest result, were He not human. In His highest glory, as in His deepest humiliation, He is ours. On Calvary's cross and at Heaven's gate He is complete in us as we are complete in Him.

XXIII

THE CULT OF IDLENESS

THERE has been a good deal said in praise of idleness. Says Walter Savage Landor: "I like idle people; they are not rapacious. It is from rapacity most evils originate." The world is full of people who appear to sympathise with this view; who, at least, have earned its encomium. A famous traveller quoted by Montesquieu, being asked to give his impressions, said that what most struck him was the extent to which the different races of mankind were given to laziness. There seem so many of the opinion of the Indian chief that walking was better than running, standing still better than walking, and that lying down was best of all. For the real flavour of idleness you have to go south. We in the cold and humid north have to work to keep warm. It is in the Islands of the Caribbean, or by the coral strands of the Pacific, that you get the cult in its perfection. There, in that glorious sunlight, work seems a kind of profanation, an intrusion on Nature's order. Why should your native work? A loin-cloth clothes him, the sun warms him, the cocoa-nut, the banana, and myriad luscious fruits which grow of themselves, are there for his sustenance. Let a man stretch himself under his palm, take into himself the air, the light, the beauty, and be satisfied with the sense of existence.

The Cult of Idleness

If all the world were like that the probabilities are that in all the ages there would have been the very minimum of work done. Man would have existed as part of this luxurious nature, and there would have been no record of his doings.

Things have not been ordered that way. The man of the northern regions, pursued and pressed by his winters, has inaugurated and practised a gospel of work, with momentous results to himself and his planet. His work has created astonishing changes in the earth, but most of all in himself. He has grown so that the easy-going southern native finds himself his inferior, is dominated by his strenuous energy. The northerner has created an ethic of activity, which places idleness as a fault, almost as a crime. Yet is there not something to be said for it, for occasionally, at least, doing nothing? In our feverish activity we are apt to forget that so much of it has been of a sort that had better have been left undone. Are there not, for instance, tongues that are too industrious? What a measureless amount of mischief had been saved; what domestic and public peace had been secured, if these lingual muscles, in families and in nations, had been resting instead of moving? To-day, at this height of civilisation, there are numbers of our institutions, of our organisations, about which our devoutest wish is that they could remain idle for evermore. If our policemen, our armies, our navies, our magistrates and judges, our prison warders, our asylum staffs, could all be put on the idle list; if things were so that their services, their activities were no longer required; if not one of them, so far as their professional functions were concerned, could find

The Life of the Soul

anything to do ; would not that be one of the most blessed of consummations ? If some of the world's most strenuous workers—generals, admirals, statesmen, orators—instead of doing or saying what they did, had simply not said or done them, what slaughters, what barbaric strokes of policy, what hideous catastrophes had been prevented ! At least half the world's energies have been misdirected, have worked for human misery instead of for its happiness. If Timour and Genghis Khan, and Napoleon and Metternich—to name a few energisers out of scores—had been idle where they were active, would not mankind have been the gainer ?

And even the best kind of workers, those whose efforts are not destructive or merely preventive, but directly ameliorative, do not their careers offer an argument for a wise idleness ? So much of their work had been better undone. It has been the tragedy of the creative minds, the poets, the artists, the reformers, that they have so often worked for the mere sake of working, when their energy was without inspiration, and so by a soulless industry have marred their fame. Goethe was sensible of this. " Productive work," said he, " is not an affair of much production, but of that which lasts. My advice is to force nothing, and rather to trifle and sleep away all unproductive days and hours than rather on such days to compose something which will afterwards give no one pleasure." Wordsworth lived to old age, but the poetry by which he lives was an affair of some ten years. He went on composing, but what he wrote after, with one or two exceptions, is a mere accumulation, to be dug through to reach the treasure. Luther's real accomplishment

The Cult of Idleness

which produced the Reformation was practically finished in 1523—his theses at Wittenberg, his appearance before the Emperor at Worms, his Bible translation, his great writings, “To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation,” “The Babylonish Captivity of the Church,” “The Instruction for Children,” and “Concerning the Bonds of Obedience to Temporal Emperors.” There were some seven years of that earth-shaking activity. He lived long years after, but his labours after were retrograde rather than progressive. That after-industry made no addition to his glory, was rather a blot upon it.

There are times for the best of us when Nature calls on us to do nothing, rather than do something. Then she appears to us as the praiser of idleness. When we yield to her call she offers us delicious rewards. It is the busy man who really tastes the joys of idleness. To be so utterly fatigued that you have not a thought or a stroke left in you ; and then to lie down and do nothing ; to just rest, with your head on some sunlit strand, or among the heather ; and let nature come in and caress you ; employ upon you her gracious healing forces. Does life offer anything better ? Lecky in his “Map of Life” tells of an epitaph he came upon in a German churchyard. “I will arise, O Christ, when Thou callest me, but, oh ! let me rest awhile, for I am very weary !” How many of us can sympathise with that ! To just rest ! There are souls so battered with the storms of life, so crushed under its burden, that heaven pictures itself as—to begin with, at any rate—a millennium of motionless peace.

What a much more comfortable and withal profitable life should we have if it were eased of some

The Life of the Soul

of its misdirected activities ! Weary editors, sitting at their desks, toil through reams of communications from people anxious to get into print, but who lack every literary qualification. They are so industrious. Ah, if only they would let that branch of industry alone ! What a relief to that prisoner of the desk if they would only eat, or sleep, or play golf, or do anything but write ! There are boarding-school misses who hammer at pianos for hours each day, who will never do anything with this industry but rack the ears and nerves of martyred listeners. There are people whose one industry is in the way of formal religious exercises ; nuns in convents, monks who break their poor rest to drone through their midnight offices. In a side chapel of St. Peter's at Rome, we listened once to some score of able-bodied men who were chanting the psalms. As the dreary recital went on we found ourselves wondering that men with bones and muscles, with brains of a sort, should employ these good materials in so strange a fashion. They were supposed to be addressing the celestial powers. What a business for Heaven, had it nothing better to do than to listen, through all the days and all the years, to these endless repetitions ! To suppose it does listen is hardly a compliment to the heavenly intelligence.

So far this might seem to be an essay in praise of idleness, but that is not at all our intention. There have been in our history, as we have hinted, an immense number of things done that had been better undone, where sheer idleness had been preferable. But that is no recommendation to do nothing. After all, ours is a working universe, and one that has no mercy on the shirkers. We have suggested that the

The Cult of Idleness

heavenly powers do not always listen to mechanical religious repetitions. But that does not imply an idleness up yonder. The powers there are occupied with real activities! And such activities! To produce a single colour on the chromatic scale requires countless millions of ether vibrations. The very atoms, which we had thought of as centres of immobility, are now discovered to be centres of force, each a sort of interior solar system, with electrons revolving round them at inconceivable velocities. When we in our weariness lie down and rest, Nature is not resting. She is at work on every part of us, building up tissue, reinvigorating exhausted brain cells, carrying on over every part of our system her mysterious therapeutics. When one part of us is utterly idle, it is that some other part may get its chance of operation. When the brain worker falls back exhausted, unable to add a stroke to his work, his subconscious part is often at its fullest energy. Our upper thought is dead, or asleep; but our under thought, our sub-conscious self, is so fully alive. By and by its activities will appear in the emergence of the best thoughts we ever had.

The universe we are in is an example of industry, which we shall all of us disregard at our peril. But it is plain we shall have to revise our notions both of industry and idleness. There have been, and are, abundance of mischievous industries. We shall have to abolish these; but that does not mean a lapse into laziness of those concerned in them. They will have to turn to work that counts. What is happening to-day is that we are getting new values for work. Of old, men energised with their muscles. They handled the spade, the axe, the loom. A great mass

The Life of the Soul

of this labour has been dispossessed, dispossessed by thought. Arkwright invents his loom and the old hand-worker drops out. Spade husbandry is succeeded by the steam plough; the flail disappears before the threshing machine. Here are industries despoiled of all their virtue, for there is no virtue in machinery. One man's bit of thinking throws all those muscles idle. The brain worker rules the world; it is *his* virtue that counts. Has it occurred to us what sort of a world we shall get when all the old hand toilers are set at leisure to labour with their minds instead of their muscles? That means the earth's thought-power increased a millionfold. One of its first exercises will be to re-organise work, to stop the useless, the mischievous activity, and to set it upon the things worth doing.

It will destroy stupid work and insist on good work. Man will toil as the heavenly powers toil, with a fine wisdom in harmony with all that is. Everyone will have leisure, but a leisure that he will turn to profit. Bellamy, in his "Looking Backward," described the social condition of the nineteenth century as that of a prodigious coach to which the masses were harnessed, and who dragged it toilsomely along a very hilly and sandy road. The passengers seated on the top would call down encouragingly to the toilers at the rope; but they always expected to be drawn and not to pull. It was a fairly true picture of what undoubtedly will have to cease. For one thing, the coach is rapidly ceasing to be drawn by human muscles. We are instead harnessing to it the nature forces. Men will think instead of pulling. With thought behind it, the coach will go of itself. In future, where men's hands are still employed,

The Cult of Idleness

they will work in unison with high thoughts, in exalted labour ; of the arts which develop beauty, of the sciences which control force.

And behind all other activities the soul will work ; will work outwards and inwards and upwards, until every labour is saturated with love and with purity ; work into brotherhoods, into holy fellowships ; work upwards till it reaches beyond the clouds, and sees God in His heaven.

XXIV

THE LACK OF GREATNESS

“ A PEOPLE is the roundabout way by which Nature arrives at six or seven great men.” The saying is Nietzsche’s, one entirely characteristic of his cynical philosophy. It is at once more respectable and more true to life if we turn it round and say, “ Nature’s six or seven great men are her way of arriving at a people.” Without, however, discussing that question, the point before us is whether at the present time we *have* the great ones, or are in any fair way of producing them ? In raising it we have no wish to play the easy and well-used rôle of the *laudator temporis acti*. The old stagers are so apt to think there is nothing good in their own day. There is an interesting book, published some forty years ago by M. Rigault, of the French Academy, in which he gives a history of the eternal battle between the ancients and the moderns. He describes there how, generation after generation, in his own country and elsewhere, writers have contended now for this, now for that side of the subject ; one school ascribing all the wisdom, all the greatness, to the men of the past, the other finding all the glory of life in the present and the coming days. This, at the beginning, has to be conceded, that we are not good judges of our own time. We are too near to get the proper perspective. When we remember—to go no farther back—the

The Lack of Greatness

sneers with which a Wordsworth, a Keats, a Tennyson were greeted by their contemporaries, and which followed them for so considerable a part of their career, we may well be cautious how we appraise the men of the present hour.

In talking, too, of a people, of a time, we have, in appreciating their greatness, or the lack of it, to consider, not simply the outstanding names, but the general level of character and performance. If the choice is between a high average of ability and well-doing, without special prominence, and a state of things where the splendour of a few names is accentuated by the mental and moral poverty of their contemporaries, we should not hesitate in our choice. In such a case we should sympathise with the daring line of our poet :—

Make no more giants, God,
But elevate the race at once !

Carlyle had his eye on that aspect of greatness when, in "Past and Present," speaking of England, he says : "The English are a dumb people. They can do great acts but not describe them. Nature alone knows thee, acknowledges the bulk and strength of thee : thy epic, unsung in words, is written in huge characters, on the face of this planet—sea moles, cotton trades, railways, fleets and cities, Indian Empires, Americas, New Hollands, legible throughout the solar system !" In this aspect of it there is greatness enough in Britain yet. She has writ herself larger on the globe than in Carlyle's time. She is the Rome of the modern world, carrying her roads, her laws, her administration, her commerce, her mighty engineerings, to earth's farthest bounds. And she is humanising her peoples. To produce a

The Life of the Soul

material and moral progress amongst the masses, to infect them with noble ideas, is an infinitely better thing than to concentrate all this in a few *élite*, whose illumination and happiness throw only into stronger relief the abject misery of the multitudes around them. And it is this which the future historian will have to say of the England of our time.

Yet with all this granted, it remains that we need the great, the outstanding men, and fare badly without them. And this because your great man doubles the value of all the others he is in contact with. He sets the pace ; he opens the way. Breathing his atmosphere, men draw into themselves, insensibly, something of the secret of his life, the vast vitality of his soul. It was said the presence of Napoleon on the battlefield was worth an army corps. Under his eyes each soldier was double himself. In religion it is the same. One Wesley is worth a dozen Conferences. When men of this calibre are absent from the field, instead of the clarion voice of the leader we have the confused hubbub of the crowd. The Church gathers itself together in synods and assemblies ; issues reports as to the decay of its numbers ; has interminable discussions on the state of affairs ; draws up new constitutions ; consumes the hours of the day and the night, consumes endless reams of good paper, in harangues, in proclamations, in protocols, in warnings and appeals. And the world goes on its old indifferent way. Let the genuine man appear, the prophet of the time, and there is an end of this. He is his own protocol, his own method. He is the conference ; he is the battle. The legions range themselves behind him, knowing that there, at the front, is the secret

The Lack of Greatness

of victory. It is no synod, or assembly, or written constitution, or carefully elaborated new scheme that produces your Luther. To get *him* is your Church problem. Is it not time, amid our weary lucubrations, that we turned our attention in that direction ; to the problem of how our Luther is to be procured ?

There is no doubt as to the present lack of men of the highest type. The dearth is evident over the whole world. Our best men are successful rather than great. Germany is making money, but where are its Goethe, its Schiller, its Kant, its Beethoven ? Italy has freed herself and is spinning and weaving and speculating. But where shall we look for a new Dante, a new Raphael, or Angelo, or Da Vinci ; where for a Savonarola ? France is without a name to put beside its Pascal, its Racine, its Fénelon, its Voltaire ; even its Chateaubriand or its Victor Hugo. Our colonies are prosperous ; but when will Canada or Australia produce their Shakespeare, produce a man to stand with the Elizabethan giants ? At present, so far from giving the world its leaders in the great things—in science, literature, or religion—the colonies are having to import their professors and their preachers—the rank and file of the mind and of the soul. And England herself, who exports so freely of her rank and file, has she any leaders to export, or any for her home consumption ? Are any in sight of whom Matthew Arnold sings :—

The one or two immortal lights
Rise slowly up into the sky,
To shine there everlastingly ?

We fill more pages of print to-day than in any epoch of our history. But whether any line of it will

The Life of the Soul

confer immortality on our epoch is a question we do not like to ask ourselves. Our supreme poet, our supreme artist, our genius of religion, are yet to seek.

The question recurs, then, and with the more insistence ; how, amid all our producings, are we to get *this* product ? It is the one indispensable thing ; the thing we cannot do without, and of which, at present, we have no supply. Is there no way of getting it ? Have we to trust here to chance, or to some deep law of nature, whose mystery is beyond our fathoming ? Certainly the mystery is deep, beyond any plumb-line that has yet been let down. We are unable to say how the great births have come about. We cannot account for Shakespeare by any study of his ancestry. And the great men, when they do come, do not propagate their greatness. Their children too often are the opposites of themselves. Marcus Aurelius is the father of a Commodus ; the noble Germanicus begets the mad fool Caligula ; Cromwell is followed by a Richard Cromwell ; the philanthropist Howard has a son who shames him by his drunkenness and libertinage. And the greatness of nations follows a curve too large for our comprehension. Greece, in the time of Pericles, produced a harvest of ability, of genius, in proportion to its population, which the world has not seen equalled. It sank, and from then till now has given us nothing of the first class. For thirty years of the Renaissance Italy shone with a galaxy of names which illuminated the world. It has done nothing comparable since. And in England we have never produced, in any given period since, a half-dozen we could match with a half-dozen to be picked from "the spacious days of great Elizabeth." It

The Lack of Greatness

would seem as though the human race, in its history, follows a law similar to that seen in the world's geography ; where the land, spread for vast spaces over level plains, at given intervals rises to great peaks and mountain chains ; to descend again, by foothills and lesser eminences, to farther reaches of inconspicuous lowland.

Truly the law of great births, of eugenics—to use the modern phrase—is an obscure one. Nevertheless, we are not without indications as to its general trend. Nature, if she withholds her demonstrations, at least gives us hints. She tells us, for one thing, that we shall never get great men unless we take up the making of manhood as our chief and overmastering consideration. Our manufactures are worse than nothing unless this manufacture is properly considered. Thucydides, in his account of Attica, says that while other Grecian States were noted for their production of corn, wine and oil, Attica was celebrated for its produce of men. *Rem acu.* His needle there touches the spot. And to make men we must begin with making their bodies. The first condition of success, says Herbert Spencer, is to be a good animal. And the makers here are hard work, wholesome food, and fresh air. When shall we learn that we cannot build a first-class race out of the noisome, thrice-breathed air of crowded homes, of unwholesome cities ? We have now three parts of our population in those conditions, and we might as well have put them into a mortuary chamber. “ The fresh air of the open country,” says Goethe, “ is the proper place to which we belong ; it is as if the breath of God were there wafted immediately to men, and a divine power exerted its influence.”

The Life of the Soul

England won its place in the world ; reared the conquerors at Agincourt, Quebec, and Plassy, its Shakespeares, Miltons, Cromwells, its Puritans, when the country was a country population, bred in the open. It has discovered no substitute for that *régime*. Its present attempt to dispense with it will prove the most disastrous of experiments.

Greatness has had for its other conditions simplicity, hardship, the contact with difficulties, dangers, and sufferings. " Know ye not," says Nietzsche, " that the discipline of suffering alone, suffering . . . has carried men to great heights ? " However that may be as an ultimate proposition, we know at least that so far the prophets and leaders of the race have been trained in that school. " Made perfect through suffering " is the New Testament description of the training of Jesus. That He was born into the working class, in the home of a carpenter ; that He lived in the open, fared hard, had no banking account, had the poor and outcast for companions, and died a death of cruel pain, is surely one of the biggest things in His Gospel. Beyond all the theologies that rest on His name, stand out these facts as of prime significance for us—significant as the data of the great life. And they fit in with all the rest that we know as to the cult of greatness. Buddha was born into the princely state. To win his greatness he renounced all that ; entered on the path of privation and of beggardom. So was it with Confucius, with Bernard, with St. Francis, with Loyola. Study any great life that has ever been lived, not in the religious line only, but on every field of affairs, and you will find that it is in difficulties, in struggles, in the fronting of perils

The Lack of Greatness

and ghastly possibilities, that the great spirits have been formed. We are now all for wealth and ease. Jewry, which gave us our religion, has for these last eighteen centuries been a race of money makers. Result that, if we may except Spinoza, it has produced no prophet since St. Paul. In our rush for epicureanism and eudæmonism, have we ever speculated as to what heights we shall reach along that line? The sort of country through which these paths lead is illustrated by a recent controversy in which a writer in a well-known review advocated the revision of our ethical code in the direction of allowing our women the same sexual licence as "fashionable society" permits to men. Our latest definition of freedom is a freedom for our womanhood to become impure! We are certainly getting on.

To make and to keep a race great, with a chance of evolving supermen at its top, we require, we say, if past experience is any guide, conditions for health and bodily vigour, and the contact with labour, hardship and difficulty. But there is more than that. There must be the permeation of the people with ennobling ideas. As necessary as a pure air is to the body is a bracing atmosphere for the mind. There must be a diffused sense of and feeling for greatness. It is on this the soul of a people must be nourished—on great examples and on great ideas. And this cult of greatness, if it is to come to anything, must not be confused with a mere cleverness. You may have an infinity of talent and a nation of rogues. Talent at its best is a thin affair. Your Pica de Mirandola shall, at the age of twenty, speak twenty-two languages. He may, and be after all the man we find in "Hudibras":

The Life of the Soul

He that is but able to express
No sense at all in several languages,
Will pass for learned than he that's known
To speak the strongest reason in his own.

Erasmus was a cleverer and more learned man than Luther. But weigh the two in the scale of depth and performance, and where is your Erasmus? Greatness is never a surface affair. It is lodged in the hidden depths of character.

And thus it is that, to help a people upward, you must use the forces that reach those depths. And the one and only force that is adequate here is that of vital religion. Hausrath is hardly regarded as an orthodox critic, yet note this observation of his: "Religious life is one of the most powerful motives in healthy nations, but its significance is still more strongly felt through the void left in the life of a people by its decay." And on the positive side let us add this testimony of another impartial historian. Says Justin McCarthy in his "History of the Four Georges," of Wesley and Whitefield, "The man must have no religious feeling of any kind who does not recognise the unspeakable value of the great reforms which they introduced. . . . They pierced through the dull, vulgar, contaminated hideousness of low and vicious life, and sent streaming in upon it the light of a higher world and a brighter law." The Scottish people has, for some generations now, enjoyed a singular mental and moral pre-eminence. As has been truly said, no people since the golden age of Greece has reached a higher level, or produced, in proportion to its numbers, such a number of outstanding men. Is there any doubt as to the causes of this? Other nations may well take note. At

The Lack of Greatness

the time of the Reformation, nigh four centuries ago, Knox and his coadjutors laid for their country the foundations of a real religion and a real education. The Bible, that book, above all others, of deep souls and deep things, became the common property of the people. And with the Bible came the common school and the common university. While England at the same momentous hour of choice harked back to semi-feudalism, setting up a ceremonial religion, and closing its seats of learning to all but a privileged class and a privileged sect, Scotland, child of a happier destiny, opened to its entire people, its humblest as well as its highest, the foundations of knowledge, and the fountains of spiritual power. No world history has ever shown more strikingly the play of cause and effect in the evolution of a people.

We are not then, on this supreme matter, entirely in the dark. The whole question is whether we are prepared to follow the light so far as it opens to us. People talk of decay of nations, of the decay of Churches, as though there were a kind of fate in it. Let us not believe it. Life is only a downgrade affair when we disobey the laws of it. Get on the track of those laws and every step is upward. And we are beginning to learn these things. We are at the first dawn of a new science of life. As that progresses and its fruits appear, man will reach levels of character and of achievement for which the past, great as it has been, will show as only the first laborious steps of preparation. Is not this what the Master meant in His saying: "I will show you greater things than these"?

XXV

CONCERNING BIG THINGS

“ I PLAY with life ; it is the only thing it is good for,” said Voltaire, who was rather fond of expressing himself that way. “ *Il faisait le tout en badinant.*” “ He treated everything as a jest,” says one of his contemporaries. He speaks elsewhere of the world as a joke, and a rather poor one. That has been a French way of looking at things ever since Rabelais, with his *rire énorme*, made fun of Church and State, of theology, and philosophy, of heaven and hell. We are not to take this jibe at seriousness too seriously. Both Rabelais and Voltaire did some very big things and some very serious things. Jowett, of Balliol, said of the latter “ that he did more good than all the Church Fathers put together ”—a somewhat startling judgment for an Oxford don, worth recalling even if we do not endorse it. But this way of treating life as a small affair, an affair of trifles which do not much matter, was a fashion of the time, an English fashion as well as a French one. You get that view in the letters of Lady Mary Montagu and in those of Horace Walpole. Benjamin Constant finds the chief blessing of life to be that of amusing oneself. William Law lashes the prevailing temper in his sketch of “ Flavia.” “ If she lives thirty years in this way, she will have spent fifteen in bed, and fourteen in eating, drinking, dressing, visiting, reading

Concerning Big Things

plays and romances, and going to the theatre." In our own time we have an enormous number of people to whom the criticism would strictly apply. Life, in this expression of it, is a very small affair indeed. Sophie Charlotte, Queen of Prussia, grandmother of Frederick the Great, was once discoursed to by Leibnitz on "the infinitely little." "Mon Dieu," said she afterwards, "as if I did not know enough of that!" The life of courts produced enough of this element. And the life of courts, and of circles outside courts, goes on producing it with unabated zest to-day.

Far be it from us to wage war upon life's smaller, its trivial aspects. The "infinitely little" is certainly there, and has its claim upon us. And the comic aspect of things has also its appeal to all healthy minds. Our laugh, be sure, is heaven-born, comes of one of our finest human faculties. Man would not be man without it. Often it is our best interpretation. But our joke may be carried too far. It is so when it is made the sole interpreter. We shall miss life's meanings if we let it end here. Against this study of littleness, for which we have such ample opportunities, let us put the study of greatness. That, and not the infinitely little, is what we are here for. Nature loves her jest, but on the whole she is tremendously in earnest. We are here for big things, for grandeurs and sublimities, and the meanest and obscurest of us will fatally miss his way unless he makes that the bottom fact in his consciousness. A bold proposition, perhaps, but let us see how it works out.

To begin with, we are in a big universe, and we are the only creatures on this planet who are aware

The Life of the Soul

of the fact. Our myriad fellow-creatures dwell in a small world. They never stop outside the finite. The ant knows its ant-hill and little more. The ox grazing in the field has a field for its world. The eagle surveys a vast prospect, but compare it with the human prospect! Man is a small creature. His skull is a few inches across. But the things that are locked up there! His vision traverses millions of miles of space, and where his eye fails his thought begins. There are no walls to his thought. He stands up consciously as part of an infinity of extension, an eternity of duration. He is infinite and eternal, because these two things, infinity and eternity, are in his apprehension, are the basis of his mental structure. There could be no infinite around him unless there were an infinite within him. For all creatures are the size of the world they live in. The stars could convey no message to us were it not that our nature is starry, on the scale celestial.

Consider, too, the career on which we are launched. We are thrust upon great adventures. We have each one of us, every day of our lives, to encounter the unknown. What a discipline is this silence of nature. Our fathers found much of the greatness of life to lie in the revelations that have been made. We are disposed rather to put it in the little that is revealed. So much is left to ourselves, to our courage, to our trust. We are perpetually taking leaps in the dark. The maiden in her twenties receives her offer of marriage, to which she must give her "yes" or "no." Her life hinges on that answer, but there is no word given as to what it will mean to her of happiness or sorrow. She must will herself away in the dark. Consider our capacity of suffering.

Concerning Big Things

Every nerve in us carries a possibility of agony ; all our affections, our mind's ambitions, our heart's desires, can be made the instruments of pain. And we are in a world which tests them to the uttermost. We are ever near neighbours to catastrophe, and the point is that we are aware of it. The lower animals suffer pain, but they have no foresight of it. Whereas we know the sort of world we are in ; we know the deadly blows it can aim at us. And at the end we shall all face the tremendous adventure of death ; all of us take the leap into that greatest unknown.

What does all this mean ? Many things, doubtless ; many things beyond our present comprehension. But one of them surely is this : that life, for us, is meant to be something beyond the dimensions of a jest. We are something bigger than our biggest laugh. We have been put up against big things, a sign that the Framer of us accounts us big. We do not set pigmies to fight giants. Things are matched according to their capacities. That we are set in such an arena ; ushered into the presence of infinities and eternities ; counted equal to such endurances, such vast adventures, is not this the sign of what is thought of us by the Ruling Power ? Our doubts, our fears, the fateful decisions thrust upon us ; life's appalling possibilities, its immense despairs ; these are no schemes for ants and moles. The scheme supposes our greatness. It is a plan for heroes ; for the making of them, at least, if they are not that already. The scheme were ridiculous if it meant anything less than this. Its size, its character fit in, not with the infinitely little, but with the infinitely great.

We are called upon, we say, for big things. That

The Life of the Soul

is Nature's invitation to us, her clear revelation concerning us, the first article of her religion. She puts no bounds to our possibilities. The stuff in you, she says, is the essence of all that was, and is, and is to be. She is ambitious for us, as a mother who discerns in her children divine capabilities. And man has given what is, on the whole, a wonderful response to her call. Tiny creature that he is, he has mastered his planet and changed it out of all recognition. He has yoked his brain to the elemental forces and made them the servants of his will. His are the strength of the winds and the waves. He has struck the secret of the hidden powers, and is on the way to the innermost of all. He can construct things a thousand times his own size, a thousand times his own strength. As a maker, a builder, an inventor, there is no end to his creations. If he were made for that only; if that of itself were greatness, we could pronounce him an unqualified success. But it is just here that our doubt comes in. For this work, after all, is not himself. A spider is just the same a spider, with all its ugliness, though it live in a palace; and a man may stand mid the largest creations and be himself as a spider in the palace, entirely unbeautiful.

Modern society is as yet quite at sea as to what constitutes greatness. It has forgotten some excellent lessons on this subject, and has put no better knowledge in their place. Its present verdict is for enormous outside possessions. It is not the man but the load he carries on his back that is the big thing. And the load is not ornamental. An American society novel pictures a dinner party of millionaires. The hostess stands on a ten thousand

Concerning Big Things

dollar rug, looks round on her hundred thousand dollar drawing-room, which is part of a two million dollar mansion. At dinner one of the guests addresses his neighbour in a fifty million dollar voice, and is answered in the deprecatingly humble merely ten million dollar tone. It is not wit, or wisdom, or inner nobleness, but simply money that talks. Is this the *ne plus ultra* of humanity? The old pagan world could teach us better. To its thinkers, greatness was an affair of the man, not of his possessions. They visualised their own soul, and thought of man as great or not great according to its size and quality. "Give me," says Plato in the *Phædrus*, "beauty in the inward soul, and may the outward and inward man be at one. May I reckon the wise to be wealthy, and may I have such a quantity of gold as none but the temperate man may bear and carry." And this inner beauty was to be attained by contact with the sublimities of the inner, spiritual world. How does our shoddy millionaire look in contact with this idea of the "*Phædo*"? "But when, returning unto herself, the soul reflects, she then passes into the other world, the abode of purity and eternity, and immortality and unchangeableness, which are her kindred, and with whom she ever lives, when she is by herself and is not let or hindered. And this state of the soul is called wisdom."

Does Park-lane or Fifth Avenue, we wonder, ever read Longinus? In his treatise on "*The Sublime*," there are some things which might be profitably studied there. To our modern money-maker he has some quite surprising things to say. He is colour-blind to the virtues of dollardom. Sublimity, he avers, is "the note which rings from a great mind";

The Life of the Soul

not, you perceive, the gold ring at all. He goes on, "If one were to look upon life all round, and see how in all things the extraordinary, the great, the beautiful stand supreme, he will at once know for what ends we have been born." But he comes still closer: "I try to reckon it up, but I cannot discover how it is possible that we, who so greatly honour boundless wealth, who, to speak more truly, make it a god, can fail to receive into our souls the kindred evils which enter with it . . . When all no longer look up, nor oftentime take any account of good reputation, little by little the ruin of their whole life is affected; all greatness of soul dwindles and withers, and ceases to be emulated, while men admire their own mortal parts and neglect to improve the immortal. A judge bribed for his verdict could never be a free and sound judge. . . . Even so where bribes rule our whole lives, where we purchase with our soul gain from wherever it comes, do we really expect amid this ruin and undoing of our life that anyone can be a free and uncorrupted judge of the great things, of the things that reach to eternity?"

We call these men pagans and ourselves Christians. They were better Christians than we are. And we have to come back to their teaching. They saw clearly what we, with our bemuddled vision, are failing to see, that greatness is an affair, not of the things outside us, but of the things inside us. They heard, what we are becoming deaf to, the call of the invisible. They felt in them the presence of the spiritual world. They saw into the human problem, that it lay in the type of manhood we produce; that greatness finds itself not in the size of our buildings

Concerning Big Things

or of our bank balances, but in the size of the soul ; in the quality and furniture of it ; in the possession there of strong convictions, of high thinking, of noble feeling.

We seem engaged to-day upon the business of belittlement. We enlarge everything but ourselves. We build leviathans and skyscrapers, and dwarf our own nature. We cover the sky with a roof of drab materialism. We deny our connection with the infinite and the heavenly. We assail the convictions for which of old men died. Where is the temper which enables a man to say, as that old Covenanter, David Cargill, said when executed for his faith at Edinburgh : " The Lord knows I go up this ladder with less fear, confusion, or perturbation of mind, than ever I entered a pulpit to preach " ? " We have not enough faith to-day," said Renan, " to produce a heretic." We are belittling marriage and proposing instead a chance sexual connection ; we belittle chastity as an old convention which interferes with passional enjoyment ; we deny to love its loftiest meaning and phrase it in terms of animalism. We are living beneath the great literatures. They were never cheaper and never less read. Instead of feeding on the great souls, the age draws its inspiration from the sporting papers, and from novels whose interest lies in their uncleanness. We can do wonders with steam, with electricity, with aeroplanes, and are in a chaos as to what we should do with ourselves. We have no clear ideas as to how we should be born, how educated, how fitted for the business of living. We are in a war of classes as to the distribution of property, a war in which hatred, revenge, and the compulsion of physical force are to

The Life of the Soul

be called in aid. As if this were the road to human well-being ; as if there could be any solution of that problem apart from an inner solution ; as if there were any road to human happiness away from the road of the soul's discipline, purification and enlargement ! It is a wonderful thing, we say, to travel at sixty miles an hour. Yes, but if you are a fool or a rogue when you get into the train and are a fool or a rogue when you get out of it ! Magnificent, to flash news from New York to London in thirty seconds. But if the news is only of divorce, or swindling, or political corruption, have we gained much ?

The big things are all in the soul, and proceed from the soul. The outside property depends first and last on the inside property. There will be no right production of goods and no right sharing of them until there has been a right production and a right distribution in human souls, of conscience, veracity, purity and love—a production and distribution there of religion, in the high, eternal sense of it. Make us all millionaires to-morrow, and the great things of life would remain just what they were and where they were—would remain in our relation to this universe and to the Ruler of it ; in being and doing, and suffering ; in the doing of our daily work ; in our right relation to our fellow ; in sympathy, and service, and sacrifice ; in the development of our powers ; in the lifting of them to ever higher levels ; in meeting the mystery of life ; in facing death and what is after death. Amid all our material advancements shall we ever get beyond this, which Socrates, in the “ Georgias,” says to Callicles ? “ I consider how I shall present my soul, whole and undefiled,

Concerning Big Things

before the judge in that day. Renouncing the honours at which the world aims, I desire only to know the truth, and to live as well as I can, and when the time comes to die. And to the utmost of my power I exhort all other men to do the same."

The big things are things which are open to us all. In offering them to us Nature scorns our petty distinctions of rank and station, even our distinctions of gift and faculty. In reading these lines you have perhaps railed at the world, at the writer, and at yourself. "Big things! What big things have fallen to my lot? Everything around me is petty and circumscribed. Feeble in body, feeble in mind, one of the unendowed, at the hindmost of the rank and file!" Do not rail, my brother; do not despise yourself. You are in a big world and with a big destiny. Your very weakness, your limitation, are *your* big things. They are there for you to act nobly in them, to fight the good fight with them. Do you not see here the trust that is reposed in you? You have so much greater a fight than that of the other man who is so much easier placed. In this hardest post you have the chance of the greater triumph. Throughout the fight the Watchman has his eye upon you. In that inner struggle you are waging, there is more glory to be won—in due time to be manifested—than in all the blood-stained battlefields of militant conquerors.

XXVI

THE DEEPER REASON

COLERIDGE, in his "Aids to Reflection," drawing largely upon Kant and his other German masters, makes much of the difference between reason and understanding. By understanding he means the faculty which deals with the data furnished by the senses ; by reason the faculty of reflection, of pure thought, which, governed by its own laws, pronounces the ultimate verdicts. The one we share with other animals, though in a higher degree ; the other is on this earth, the prerogative of man alone. The Coleridge argument was received with enthusiasm by the orthodoxy of the day, which used it in ways he himself hardly approved. It was so comfortable when science urged facts disagreeable to dogmatic assumptions, to escape by appeal to another court. "Your facts are perhaps rather confounding to the understanding, but then, you see, we have a judge of appeal who quashes your verdict !" The Coleridge plea of reason *versus* understanding has, we say, been much misused—worked in ways the modern mind cannot endorse. It cannot accept the ideal of a dual control, still less of a contradictory control. The mind moves altogether. It is essentially a harmony and not a discord.

But the Coleridge idea, whatever obscurities there may be in his own statement of it, and whatever

The Deeper Reason

mishandlings it has suffered at the hands of his followers, has been a fruitful one. He put the thought of his day on a track which has brought us to a higher point and a firmer ground than his own. We have no faculties in opposition to each other, or that really contradict each other's verdicts. But the understanding, the calculating, scientific faculty as we now call it—the faculty which deals with matter and force, which is the instrument of our scientific research, is to-day discovering its own limits, and that by the exercise of its own powers. And it is recognising the fact that side by side with it are contents of the soul, which, in their hints and predictions, are more to be trusted than itself. Science, as the exponent of the outside material world, is drawing its own boundary lines, beyond which its instruments are not competent in the search for reality. Bergson, our latest and finest exponent of the new philosophy, in his "Matter and Memory," and his "Time and Free Will," has magnificently demonstrated, and that by the very methods of science, the futility of the attempt to explain the mind by arguments derived from matter. The materialistic Monism is as dead as Queen Anne.

The human problem, the problem of the relation of man to life and the universe, as he shows, can never be solved by the data with which science alone can deal. There is in us a deeper reason, which, while not contradicting our own logic, goes far beyond it. There are in us other elements which contain this deeper reason without expressing it, and which have always to be taken into account. These other contents of our nature—instincts, feelings, sympathies,

The Life of the Soul

aspirations—we are now beginning to perceive, have in them a subtler logic than our expressed logic ; have a further reach, a deeper implication than our formulæ, and are on the whole more trustworthy than they. “ Zwei Seelen wohnen ach ! in meiner Brust.” Pasteur, so rigid a scientist, has expressed this on his own behalf : “ There are,” says he, “ two men in each one of us : the scientist, he who starts with a clear field and desires to rise to the knowledge of nature through observation, experiment, and reasoning ; and the man of sentiment, the man of belief, the man who mourns his dead children, and who cannot, alas ! prove that he will see them again, but believes that he will, and lives in that hope.” It is precisely here, in the instinct of belief, in the instinct of hope, that we find at work our surest reason. The soul’s promises here, greater than the visible reality, are reality in the making. We are at present only at the beginning of our creation, and our instincts are the clearest signs of the course that fuller creation is to take.

We are full, we say, of a reason that is deeper than our logic, deeper even than our consciousness. See that child in its cradle. It knows absolutely nothing of how it came to be, of what it is going to be. It is, we say, absolutely dependent upon its parents’ love and care. But how much do its parents know ? How much can they do ? They are more or less expert at child-rearing, and will do their best. But do they know anything of the process by which the air the child breathes, the food it takes, are converted into vital force ? Do they know how its billions of cells keep themselves alive and perform their functions ; how the heart keeps beating and the lungs respiring ;

The Deeper Reason

how the several parts of its multiform organism work harmoniously into each other, and together keep it growing and developing day by day? But if the child and its parents are ignorant here, who is it that knows? Is there not here, plain before your eyes, at work a deeper reason? Can you, as you watch that child in its cradle, help bowing before a Power, so tender, so loving, that with a more than mortal wisdom is nursing it into life?

Go further. When you watch a tool, a machine, what are you looking at? A piece of cold steel, a collection of rods and frames. Is that all? The tool, the machine, are full of thought—not their own thought, but another's. The man who conceived that machine is, in a way, living in it. His ingenuity, his purpose, his hope, are all there, and will be as long as it lasts. Without that thought it would not be what it is. You may call it, if you like, objectified thought. And when you look at a stone, at a tree, or away from them to the whole panorama of the heavens and the earth, what is it you see? That, too, is objectified thought. For the stone, the tree, the Universe are all under law—law under which they all fit into each and each into all; under which they all work with a purpose, part of which we can see, and part of which is hidden from us. But what are laws, relations, purposes, but thought? Where does that come from; *whose* thought is it? Diderot argued that as the brain is the organ of thought, when our brain ceased our thought would cease. Was there ever a funnier argument? If the brain alone causes thought, the thought in the universe must come from some gigantic brain hid somewhere in the depths of space. One wonders what its size must be, and

The Life of the Soul

how this brain got itself constructed apart from a thought to construct it ?

With such evidence before us of that deeper reason which, invisible but ever present, works incessantly within us and around us, we may proceed to make some suggestions concerning it which seem to be fairly well founded. For instance, if the child, as we have seen, is maintained in life and growth by a knowledge and a care which are certainly not its own, may we not assume that its after career is under the same guidance ? The grown man is, in a way, put in possession of himself. He is left to do all that he can do. The unseen Power is full of economies. It will not waste its strength where it is not wanted. But over the vastest area of his life the man is helpless. He cannot keep his own heart beating. He knows nothing of what is going to happen. Ask him to say what he will be or do ten years hence, and he has no answer. Has the Power that keeps his heart beating no function in his life beyond this ? If the hairs of his head are all numbered—and if they were not, how could they grow and keep alive ?—if these are all numbered, are not also his footsteps through life, his mistakes, his follies, his sorrows ? Are not these all numbered and guided—and that towards ends which this deeper reason knows and has provided for ? The Providence of the child is the Providence of the man—a Providence of love that will not let him go.

And if this be so of the man, assuredly it must be also of the race. We are so engrossed with our human activities, and so satisfied with them, that we constantly fail to see that they are the outworking of a reason deeper than our own, and for ends beyond

The Deeper Reason

our own. Take as example the developments of religion, in the past, and now in our own day. At home we have our Christianity divided into sharply contrasted sects, each proclaiming its own faith and organisation as the true one. The founders of them, and their followers, acted with all sincerity. They believed in a heavenly commission to proclaim their doctrine, to establish their religious order. And we may say that they were right here as far as men can be right. When men honestly look for heaven's guidance they get it. But do we suppose they knew all they were doing ; that their purpose was the final purpose ? We are already beginning to see what they did not see. Our Episcopalians, our Independents, our Presbyterians, our Methodists, dreamed of the victory of their order over all other orders, as the establishment of the one true Christianity. We now suspect that verdict ; suspect that a deeper reason lay in this work than its fosterers imagined. In denominationalism, as it has worked hitherto, we see Nature working as she does in other biological fields, seeking after new human types, and that by segregation and separate development. And this with the further end of crossing these types, and by an after inter-communion producing a blend of all, richer incomparably by the fusion of their individual qualities.

We see this deeper reason at work in those very mistakes of faith which have often so puzzled us. Nothing is more certain than that the Early Church, in its belief in an immediate Second Advent, was under a delusion. But have we asked why ? Has it occurred to us that in the economy of things, delusions are a necessary part of the human development ?

The Life of the Soul

They are often a husk which protects the fruit. They are at the same time a source of the energy needed to carry a movement forward. The deeper reason—ever, as we have said, economic in its use of every scrap of force—uses illusions for the immediate end it designs, and then casts them aside. And as with the past, so with the future. We stand aghast often at the course things are taking, so contrary often to our sense of what should be. The deeper reason, depend upon it, is not aghast. Its great movement goes on ; a movement in which our very fears and consternations will play their appointed part.

That deeper reason is so infinite in its reach that we may well build infinite hopes upon it. Our fears come from our limitations. Can we believe that the countless millions of human beings who have lived on this earth all survive ? And if they do, will it be possible for us, amid such an inconceivable multitude, to find again those we love ? A staggering thought, doubtless ; but then everything is staggering in this universe. It is a universe of inconceivables that have actually come to pass. To find ourselves actually existing in such a world as this—is not that a thousand times more antecedently improbable than that, actually being here, we may find ourselves again in another state ? The most inconceivable is the present actual. It is science to-day that overwhelms our reason. Take one simple statement. In the space of a second, red light, of which the vibrations are the least frequent, accomplishes four hundred billions of successive vibrations. Supposing you counted this succession of vibrations, and did each in the five-hundredth part of a second, it would take you twenty-five thousand years to go through the operation.

The Deeper Reason

And yet this is what happens in the momentary flash of a red light ! That is how this universe is kept going. Everything in it is beyond us ; its movement, its energy, its wisdom, are beyond us. With what it has done for us, shall we put any limits to what it can do ?

These, we think, are fair assumptions from what we know of the actual work of the deeper reason. What it has already done is, we think, a ground for the assertion we made at the beginning—that the true organ and expression in us of that reason lies not so much in our present knowledge or our formulated experience, as in our hopes, our spiritual instincts, our ideals, our aspirations. They are the promises of what is to be. We are to live on our hopes rather than on our fears. The very fact that hope is a life-making factor ; that its immediate effect upon us is an effect for health of body and mind ; a help to the blood's circulation and to the mind's best activity ; this, in itself, should assure us that its indications are the true ones ; that in following them we are on the track to which the deeper reason points.

Grow old along with me !
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made ;
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, " A whole I planned,
Youth knows but half ; trust God ; see all,
Nor be afraid."

XXVII

RELIGION AS INWARDNESS

MANY of us have read that remarkable little work, "The Great Illusion," a work with which Mr. Norman Angell a while ago succeeded so effectually in startling the political world. He showed there how the things which, in the present situation, so impressed the senses—the bloated empires, the huge armaments, the idea of conquest as a means of enrichment—all rested upon a misconception. The real forces that were making the world, that were the factors of progress and well-being, both for nations and individuals, lay elsewhere. To multitudes it came with the force of a new and quite revolutionary idea. Indeed, it has been scoffed at as chimerical. But nobody has disproved it, nor brought any solid arguments against it.

But that is not the only optical illusion under which society to-day is suffering. There is another, if possible, more widespread and more obstinately cherished. It is one concerning religion—its real place in the world, its strength and weakness, its coming fortunes. Here, too, we are conquered by the senses; we are slaves to the eye. When we think of religion we turn instinctively to the visible signs of it; to cathedrals, churches, meeting-houses; to creeds and institutions; to rites and ceremonies; to the statistics of worship and church attendance.

Religion as Inwardness

How many buildings have been erected during the year ; are they full or empty ; what sums have been raised ; what are the figures of membership ? According to the fluctuations in these items we pronounce upon the rising or falling fortunes of religion in our midst.

All these things, of course, have their place in the scheme of religion, and are every way worthy of consideration. The mistake is to put on them the wrong emphasis, and to draw from them the wrong inferences. For no one of them is religion ; no, nor all of them put together. You might destroy every cathedral and every church ; every creed and every ceremony, and you would scarcely have touched religion. Indeed, if there were a touch at all it would be one of revival rather than of repression. For all these things, buildings, creeds, ceremonies, are like the reefs flung up by the coral insects, dead efforts of a past life ; not the life itself. For religion is living spirit and not dead matter ; and you cannot make one stand for the other.

“ The church attendances,” you say, “ are, at any rate, an affair of living persons.” True, but the rule holds even here. Does anybody nowadays read Law’s “ Serious Call ” ? It was the book which first awakened John Wesley ; one of the devoutest books ever written, and by one of the devoutest Christian souls. Yet at the very beginning we find this : “ It is very observable that there is not one command in all the Gospel for public worship ; and perhaps it is a duty that is least insisted upon in Scripture of any other. The frequent attendance at it is never so much as mentioned in all the New Testament. Whereas that religion or devotion

The Life of the Soul

which is to govern the ordinary actions of our life is to be found in almost every verse of Scripture. Our blessed Saviour and His Apostles are wholly taken up in doctrines that relate to common life." Religion, in fact, is, from beginning to end, an inwardness. It is an affair of the condition of our spirits. Its progress or decay lies in the question whether we are going forwards or backwards in our mental, moral and spiritual temper; whether or not we are adding there new graces, new powers, new beatitudes of thought and feeling. And this is true of nations and races as well as of individuals. When we want to ascertain the growth or decay of religion in the world we must turn at once from the external to the internal; we must find out whether the inner temper of the people is moving upwards or downwards.

When we have got this fairly into our minds; when we have got rid of our religious optical illusion, and have learned to interpret spiritual matters, not materially, but spiritually, we shall find ourselves in a new way of thinking about many things. For one, we shall measure people's religion, not by the creeds they subscribe, nor the forms they celebrate, but by what they are getting out of them. A man may belong to the communion you regard as entirely orthodox, may carry out all its ecclesiastical prescriptions, and so far as inwardness is concerned, have no religion in him at all. All his inwardness may be a heathen inwardness, one belonging to the lowest spiritual type. Another man whose communion is one against which you have been fighting all your life, is full interiorly of those very things which Jesus spoke of as religion. Beneath his

Religion as Inwardness

heresies we find a love, a tenderness, a sympathy, whose accent we know at once. This is the language of the Kingdom. This is the sign manual of Christ. Here is the true orthodoxy, the orthodoxy of the heart ; the orthodoxy not of the letter but of the spirit. Bishop Creighton was expressing this when he spoke of his sense of union with many men at a far remove from his own Church dogmas, a union far closer than with multitudes of those who, in his own words, " symbolise with me."

This kinship of the inner life, of the Gospel beatitudes, carries us indeed far afield. In the earliest known literature of Egypt there is extant the religious confession of a lady who, those far millenniums back, expresses her love for her God, a love which impelled her to succour and help the needy and to do all the good she could. What mattered that she called her God by another name than ours ! Our soul leaps to that kindred spirit as one truly of the household of faith ; of the faith that worketh by love. When we read of that rigid Catholic, King Louis IX. of France, that he was accustomed on every Wednesday and Friday to fill his rooms with poor people, to whom he ministered with his own hands ; when we read of him in his great crusade saying to the Saracens : " Say on my part to the king your master that I desire so greatly the salvation of his soul that I would stop in the prisons of the Saracens all my life, and never again see the sunlight, if your king and his people would become Christians in reality ;" as we read does not our soul bend instinctively before the majesty of such a love ? Where are our credal differences in the light of an inwardness of this kind ? The day is dawning upon us when this

The Life of the Soul

new perception of spiritual values will become the only one ; when we shall cease our emphasis upon doctrinal confessions, and ask, as our religious test, not what creed a man signs, but how much love he has, what amount of patience, of sympathy, of willingness to suffer and to serve ?

And we shall more and more apply this test in judging of the condition and prospects of religion in the world. How, in this respect, does the matter stand to-day ? Is religion gaining or losing ? Well, it has unquestionably lost some things. It has lost the fiery zeal which tortured and burnt men for a divergence of opinion. The Covenanters had a magnificent inwardness of sorts ; an inwardness of faith, of courage, of unworldliness, of endurance to the death, which makes us ashamed. But the narrowness, the fierceness of it ! May we not be thankful that our spirit is purged of the temper which permitted Richard Cameron, preaching on the last Sunday before his death, to break out in this fashion : “ He was assured that day the Lord would lift up a standard against antichrist that would go to the gates of Rome and burn it with fire ; and that ‘ Blood ’ should be their sign and ‘ No Quarter ’ their word ; and he earnestly wished it might first begin in Scotland ! ” The quality of our religion, as an inwardness, is full enough of imperfections. But it has developed at least to the point of making such an utterance impossible, and indeed shocking, to the men of every confession to-day.

It may be asked, indeed, whether what religion, as a spirit and temper, has lost in intensity it has not gained in inclusiveness. The idea of it and the feeling of it contain so much more than they did.

Religion as Inwardness

We see it as no longer a British, or a European, or a Protestant, or a Christendom affair, but as a human affair, in which we are sharers with the race. Contrast it with the early Puritan outlook and you see how much vaster it has become ; how incomparably richer in its reach, its interests, even its problems. We can feel the beat of the common human heart across oceans and continents. The human consciousness is drawing together, in preparation for a common move upward. Think of the changed attitude towards other races in so brief a time in world history as that between us and De Quincey ! He writes thus of China : " I am terrified by the modes of life, by the manners, and by the barrier of utter abhorrence placed between us, by feelings deeper than I can analyse. I could sooner live with lunatics or wild animals." One may safely say that the gulf between our feeling to-day and that here expressed is far greater than the gulf between ourselves and the Chinese. And to have gained this new brotherhood, is not that a prime feature in religion ? The truth about the present situation seems to be that the breaking down of much that entered into the religious life of the past is part of a movement towards a new synthesis which will make religion a vaster, more cosmopolitan, more comprehensive, and more richly furnished system than the world has ever known before.

Let us now, on this theme, get to some more personal considerations. If religion is intrinsically an inward thing, what of our own inwardness ? What is our personal progress in love, in patience, in thankfulness, in hope, in the instinct of service ? The judgment on you and me is not in our attitude

The Life of the Soul

towards the Athanasian Creed or the Thirty-nine Articles, but in our attitude towards our brother. When we have convinced ourselves of the futility of most of our outside theological controversies, we shall begin to consider this other matter, *viz.*, the vast possibilities of inwardness, and the deplorable lack of our education there. There is no one of our inner tempers and dispositions but is in a state of comparative barbarism. What is the condition of our patience? We are surrounded by people of manifold infirmities and defects. What a field is there, opened for us by the Master, for a quiet, loving endurance! You can be the saviour of their inwardness by this development of your own. To know how to be silent; how, when the word comes, to let it be charged with sweetness, with sunshine; here, more than in any public eloquence, or hymn-singing, or theological fervours, is the field for our religion. If it is not good enough for victory there, it is not good for much anywhere.

What is the condition of our cheerfulness; of our daily joyous gratitude? Are we living at the top of our circumstances or at the bottom? How are you fitting your mental state to your bodily state? You are now more or less crippled by infirmities; you can only walk one mile now where before you could walk twenty. Are you in a perpetual grumble about that lost twenty, or do you daily thank God that you can still walk one? Have you not learnt yet that to be content with what you have, in God's present will towards you; that to rejoice in His will, as containing all that is good, is a far better thing, a greater achievement, than all your athletic powers of former days? How are you progressing in the

Religion as Inwardness

science of hope? Have you gained the assurance that good is not only better than evil, but stronger; and that, spite of all present appearances, the best is going to conquer? And does this hope cause you always to stand for the best; for truth and love at any cost, though their present way be through a Calvary?

We have for years been occupied with the question of religious education, and prodigious have been our quarrels about it. It is time we began our own religious education. When we take it up in earnest we shall discover that it means one thing; that religion itself means one thing—the systematic, thorough, and complete education of the soul.

XXVIII

THE UNORGANISED FORCES

THERE is a sense in which this title may be regarded as a misnomer. If we went deep enough we should find there were no unorganised forces. This is not a fortuitous universe. Everything that works in the world of matter and the world of mind has its place in the scheme of things ; has its own apparatus, its own fitness for doing what it does. But the term will serve as well as another for describing the conditions in which we find ourselves. We are surrounded by great organisations, well established, some of them very old, the laws and customs of them clearly defined, their several parts fitted into each other, and all serving a common end. In this country we have the State, the Church, the Army, the Navy, an educational system, a commercial system. They are the things that first strike the eye. They seem to cover and control the national life. These institutions are largely conservative. They represent the *status quo*. Their primary instinct is their own self-preservation. Their leaders and rulers, whose own position depends so much on their stability, are naturally inclined to look askance on any intruding and subversive element.

But over against these institutions ; over against, we say, but rather beneath and above them, we find a region of forces, invisible, formless, without status,

The Unorganised Forces

without exchequer, with no linked battalions, or complicated machinery; a region that is, nevertheless, perpetually menacing the ease and immobility of the established order. It is these invisibles that both the present and the future have most to reckon with. They act like the thrust of vegetation that will uplift the heaviest flagstones; like the ceaseless weather attritions of the high Alps that are turning the Matterhorn into a ruin, that prove stronger than the everlasting hills. The unorganised forces, in their operation on society, have to be looked for in the deeps of the human spirit. Says Eucken: "Great things take place within us." Great things truly, the greatest of all. For it is what takes place here that controls all that takes place outside. It is the unformed that masters all the formed, and in the end takes its place. The movement that is felt beneath the oldest foundations, and makes the highest pinnacles tremble, is the movement of the unseen life. But we have not reached the bottom even yet. For man, as he is, even at his profoundest, is not the originator of that movement. It is only because he is in contact with a deeper reality than himself, in contact with a universal and eternal Spirit, that he finds himself urged ever onward, ever upward. It is by virtue of this contact we find that law of things so finely described by Coleridge in his "Aids to Reflection": "All things strive to ascend, and ascend in their striving; all lower natures find their highest good in semblances of that which is higher and better." It is thus that the seeming weak things of this world are for ever confounding the mighty.

It will be interesting to note, in some different directions, the way in which the unorganised forces

The Life of the Soul

break in upon and utterly change the existing order. China, as an established state and constitution, has been a going concern for some thousands of years. It had a change of dynasty some few centuries ago, but its ruling system, with an emperor worshipped almost as a god, with its religion, its educational system, its mandarins, its social customs, has been there for ages. Within the lifetime of many of us it stood there, the image of immobility, impregnable apparently to all assault, without or within. Then something happened within certain spirits. Blown across by winds from the West, there settled in these minds germs of unrest, of inquiry. Within them a thought arose, the thought that there were better things to be had. In search of them, of new knowledge, of new light, some of these thinkers wandered East and West ; wandered to Germany, to England, to America, to Japan. They were an unorganised force ; their motor was just a thought. To-day, as the result of that thought, we see this age-long system uprooted, China's wall—not the stone one, but that far stronger of prejudice, of caste, of obstinate pride—thrown down ; and four hundred millions of people, hitherto shut off from the world, joining themselves, heart and hand, to the onward march of progress. On one side all the established and embattled institutions ; on the other a thought ; and the thought conquers.

The victory of the unorganised is not always so striking as this ; indeed, is very rarely so. It wins ordinarily without letting people know that it has won ; without letting them know, indeed, that there has been a fight at all. Bishop Creighton, out of his historical studies, came upon a truth which few have

The Unorganised Forces

recognised : “ We sometimes speak,” he says, “ as though nothing ever happens save what is formally discussed and voted upon. The most important things are those which are unperceived and unrecognised till they have been accomplished.” The moment we look round we see how accurate that statement is. Who can account for a given change in public opinion ? Who can, for instance, put his hand upon the birth moment, or discover the exact workings of the power that brought about the existing social conscience ? Yet that new, unseen thing in the world has changed our operations in a dozen directions. The old institutions are there, but they work in a different way, and to different ends. It has revolutionised our penal code ; made the former wholesale hangings of boys and girls for trifling offences impossible. It has, in fact, altered our whole attitude towards crime. In the old days men committed their offence and got hanged, and there was an end. To-day society arraigns itself with the prisoner in the dock. It asks why he got there ; what neglects of its own, what lack of its fences and safeguards, permitted his fall. Its whole aim has changed from punishment to prevention. It seeks no longer to wreak itself on men’s badness ; it would rather cherish and help their goodness. The organisation is still there ; the penal code, the judge, the gaol. But the whole thing is changed ; and the change has been wrought by a breath from the unknown.

This new moral consciousness has not only altered our penal code. It has altered the whole range of our religious thinking. The religious organisation is still there ; in outward appearance very much as it

The Life of the Soul

was. In England we have the Establishment, and the Nonconformist bodies. Their forms of worship, their written creeds, their ecclesiastical orders are practically those of centuries ago. But they have all to reckon with this new consciousness, this something that has arisen, none can tell how or when. It has sucked from the creeds all their ancient venom. If man has found this better way of treating sin and defect, the inference is that the old way was not God's way ; for God's way is not worse than man's, but better. The moral insight which has led man to see that to meet crime and wrongdoing by mere penalty is not only a brutality but a blunder, is an insight which goes beyond ; which sees itself as arising, not out of the human will, but out of the Divine will ; that it is itself the work of God, and therefore a further revelation of His character and purpose towards man ; of His own way of dealing with sinful souls. If man is treating penal acts by reformatories and methods of reclamation, we may be sure that God is not behind His creature. The moral code is not provisional. It is as universal as gravitation. The rise of the moral consciousness has taught us with a new emphasis that God is love, everywhere and always ; in the hells as in the heavens ; that wherever souls are He is there, the force of redemption and healing.

The rise of this consciousness has in the meantime given a new edge to religion, to faith. No better illustration can be offered of it than the Conference on Foreign Missions held some time ago in Edinburgh. In the old times the urgency of the plea for missions lay in the cry that the unevangelised heathen were every minute of the day dropping into endless torment.

The Unorganised Forces

That note was entirely absent from the Conference. Yet never in the history of missions was their cause advocated with more ardency or with surer feeling of their coming world-conquest. The Conference was strictly orthodox ; represented the essential orthodoxy of the Churches. Yet that new thought, an unorganised force, issuing from the deeps of the unseen, had changed the whole missionary aspect and appeal.

The Bible is at once the history and the vindicator of the unorganised forces. Its story, rightly read, is that of the ceaseless expansion of the human spirit ; of its incessant struggle against and victory over all that opposed its onward march. The old prophets stood single-handed, revolutionaries against a cast-iron system. Against priests, against kings, against ages of custom and routine they had only their spoken word. The priests, the routine, have gone, but their word remains. Micah, watching the slaughtering of lambs and of he-goats ; watching the extortions of the hierarchy, waxing fat on the popular superstitions, burst into the magnificent cry : " What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God ? " Thousands of years after, Huxley, the nineteenth century scientist, at issue with all the orthodoxy of his day, finds in the old Hebrew's words his own resting-place, his own confession of faith. Centuries after Micah Jesus stands in a similar environment, only a worse, a more desperate one. The organised forces are mightier than ever, and more merciless. Palestine is under the shadow of invincible Rome. The national life is crushed under her weight. Within, the spiritual power is in the hands of the priests ;

The Life of the Soul

of time-serving Sadducees in league with the State, of fanatical Pharisees who make religion a round of ceremonies, a tissue of minute observances. Against it all He stands, the lonely One. He has one thing to offer, Himself—His teaching, His life, His death. And that unorganised force conquers; conquers Pharisee and Sadducee, and imperial Rome itself; conquers, and is conquering to-day. Since that greatest epoch of all history the organised forces have arisen again, risen many of them out of His very name, and have done their best to crush Him. They will pass or change, but He will endure, man's immortal hope, the key of his problem, his divinest symbol.

We come back at the end to where we began. The unorganised forces are the conquering ones. The visible is everywhere under the power of the invisible. What is to be is greater than all that is. The cracking and tumbling of our present institutions are no sign of decay, of ruin; their instability means simply the underground working of something better that is coming. And again have we here to confess our title as something of a misnomer. These underground forces are unorganised simply to our eye. They look so in comparison with the established, visible order. There is an organisation behind them, which we do not see. Huxley, to mention him once more, watching under a microscope the evolution of a salamander's egg, as he noted the stages of the movement, the swift partitions, the rise and placing of the organs, the whole unerring process, was stricken with awe and wonder. It was, he said, as if he could see the unseen artist at work, knowing his plan, sure of his effect. Be sure there was an Artist there.

The Unorganised Forces

The organisation coming into view had a higher one behind it, the organisation of Wisdom and Love. If you sprinkle a handful of soft iron filings on a sheet of paper, and pass underneath a powerful bar-magnet, the filings will arrange themselves into graceful and symmetrical curves. When the magnet is removed, all fall back into chaos. Our world—its chaos of matter and force—has had passed under it something greater than a bar-magnet ; a Power that is intelligent, that is holy. That the world does not fall into chaos ; that it advances instead into ever higher forms of purpose and beauty, is because that Power never ceases its operation. Blessed are they who rejoice in the movement and in the Power behind it. Says Plotinus : “ The doctrine serves to point the way, and guide the traveller ; the vision, however, is for him who will see it.”

XXIX

THE PRICE OF FEAR

WE pay, one way or another, for most of our emotions, but it may be safely said there is no one of them so ruinously expensive, and in so many directions, as that of fear. The world is having just now a vivid illustration of the fact in the present relations of Germany and England. The two countries are engaged in building against each other enormous fleets and armaments at a cost of scores of millions—millions wrung from their toiling masses ; millions which, applied to the well-being of their populations, would make both nations an earthly paradise. And why ? Because the two peoples fear each other. A large portion of the Press on both sides is occupied daily with the business of spreading this fear, of raising it to the point of mania. And the irony of it all is that each knows the other's fear is a groundless one. The German, we are told, of late months has hardly been able to sleep in his bed from expectation of an English invasion, or, at least, of the sudden destruction of his fleet. We who are in England could tell him there is no more likelihood of our invading Germany than of our invading Mars. The German, on his side, knows that the idea of invading England is equally absurd. The facts here are certain, but neither can persuade the other that they are facts. The nations are, for the time, possessed

The Price of Fear

not by reason, but by fear. And these millions, thrown away year by year, are the price of it. Another generation, looking back on this state of things, will regard us with contemptuous pity.

But it is not by any means only in international relations that we see the enormous expensiveness of fear. It is the cause every day of accidents, failures, deaths. It is a paralysing force. It seizes on men's nerves, muscles, brains, and puts them all out of gear. A nervous person crossing a street and met by a sudden swirl of vehicles will in nine cases out of ten do the wrong thing. His fear rushes him on the danger he seeks to avoid. A man will walk on the pavement, where a slip would be of no consequence, without any tendency to slip. Put him on a rock ledge of the same or greater breadth, but with a chasm of a thousand feet beneath him, and, unless he is trained, he will be in imminent danger of falling. Fear gets hold of his muscles and disorders their action. Crossing a ledge in the Alps once, of no danger to a climber, our guide told us that a few days before, in charge of a tourist, he had to carry the man on his back. He was helpless with terror. There are people who rob themselves of their daily happiness because they are afraid of what is going to happen. They may be in an Eden of worldly circumstance, but fear has built for them a dungeon in the midst of it, from which they cannot escape. Fear has been the evil genius of governments, of societies, of religions. The despotisms that have crushed the peoples, that have filled prisons with noble captives, that have burnt martyrs at the stake, have been built on fear. It has been the deadly foe of freedom. Men must not inquire, must not search for truth, because—something bad

The Life of the Soul

might happen. The peoples must have no liberty, because liberty was dangerous. That great word of Gladstone, "Trust the people," was, even to the day it was uttered, an incredible doctrine to the mass of rulers.

It is time, surely—the world has grown old enough—to diagnose this most potent of the emotions, to ascertain its nature, its laws, its uses, and to put it in its proper place. We have paid dearly for it ; it is time we knew something about it. There are different kinds of fear, and we must not forget there is a good fear as well as a bad one. Side by side with the fear that comes of ignorance, of want of training, of cowardice, there is the fear that comes of knowledge, the fear that goes with the highest courage. A parent will often fear where his child does not. There are things the child would touch, but must not ; would swallow, but are put out of his reach. The Alpine guide who treads easily along the edge of the precipice will stop where the tourist would go on. He sees what the inexperienced man does not see. He will even stop your talk, for the state of the snow is such that a sound may bring the avalanche. Binnen, Tyndall's guide for years, one of the best and bravest of men, on his last expedition, heard a crack in the snow above. "*Wir sind alle verloren*"—"We are all lost," he exclaimed. Most of them were, himself included.

Wholesome fear is the fear that comes from knowledge. It arises from a correct estimate of the nature and qualities of things, both in the physical and the moral world, and warns us off from actions that are contrary to their laws. There is no bravery in breaking the laws of the universe. Bravery lies

The Price of Fear

in knowing them and obeying them. No guide will jump down a precipice. He will not insult gravitation that way. He knows what gravitation would think of it. But he will walk fearlessly along the edge of it because he can trust his eye and his nerve. And when a patriot in his country's cause—a Winkelried rushing on the opposing spears—throws away his life, he does it in a trust born of inner knowledge, a trust that his country will gain by his sacrifice, and that in the other world to which he gives himself it will be well with him. And the martyrs of progress, the men who in the interests of some truth they have seen or discovered defy Church and State, are equally sure of their fact. The universe is on their side—will take care of their personality and will vindicate their memory.

The greatest fear that has been in the world is the fear inspired by religion, and especially in its views of death and of a future state. There have been the two kinds of it, the good and the bad. Death is indeed a formidable presentation to the human mind, and that whether we have faith or no faith. Rid the thought of it of every element of superstition, and yet upon the strongest minds it casts its shadow. The absence of a belief offers its own terrors. Huxley, in a letter to Morley, expresses his horror of annihilation ; his horror at the thought that in 1900 he might know no more than in 1800. He would rather, he said, be sent to the Inferno than cease to exist—provided he were accommodated in the upper circles where the temperature and the society were tolerable ! Science was rather a failure here. Goethe, in his later years, had reached something more consoling. Said he to Eckermann : “ At the age of seventy-five

The Life of the Soul

we must, of course, think sometimes of death. But this thought gives me the least uneasiness, for I am fully convinced that our spirit is a being of a nature quite indestructible, and that it actually continues from eternity to eternity."

The shadow cast by death, however, has been in innumerable cases the result not so much of a scanty belief as of a bad belief. Religion, as manipulated by ecclesiasticism and priestcraft, has been guilty here of some monstrous perversions, of some most impudent pretensions. The Church's exploitation of human fear, in the interests of its own authority, and of its pecuniary profit, has been one of the worst chapters of the world's history. There is nothing meaner to-day on this earth than Rome's doctrine of purgatory and the use she makes of it. The uninstructed masses are told that their departed dear ones are undergoing all kinds of tortures in that most uncomfortable place, from which, by cash down paid to the priests, they can be more or less relieved. Mr. Michael McCarthy, in his "Priests and People in Ireland," gives some interesting particulars as to the way in which the system is worked upon the Irish peasantry.

But the real wrong to religion, as well as the worst insult to the human intelligence, is that offered by the doctrine which has held sway in Christendom for so many centuries—that sinful man, after death, is met by an angry God, and is dealt with thereafter, not by love, but by an eternal vengeance, expressing itself in endless torment. As if God's nature could change because a man dies ! One might as well say that a mother who meets her child's fractiousness with constant patience and love so long as it is awake,

The Price of Fear

should change to a relentless fury the moment it falls asleep. One would have thought that the very face of death, as we look upon it, has been enough to dispel such ideas. Have you not noticed the beauty of a dead face? How the commonest, the ruggedest features in that hour smooth themselves, how the wrinkles of care vanish, how there steals upon it a calm as sweet as that of a sleeping child? And what is that but nature's seal of benison—her dumb assurance that the departed soul is in good hands? Can we not trust God on the other side as well as on this? Poor Heine, who had made a strange enough thing of life, murmured as his last words, "*Dieu me pardonnera ; c'est son métier,*" and he had grounds for his faith. If God is love, He is love everywhere ; in all the hells as in all the heavens. He cannot deny Himself.

Yet there is a true fear of death, one that may well be described as a godly fear. It is that which proceeds, not from ignorance, not from priestly assertions, but from knowledge ; from the facts of the universe as they offer themselves to us. It comes from our recognising that the laws of the universe in which we live, its physical and its spiritual laws, are constant. And one of these laws is that evil doing is followed by consequences, by pain and suffering. The soul cannot break these laws without penalties. We know that by our experience here. And if the physical system which obtains on this earth is the system which operates in Arcturus and Sirius, in all worlds, can we suppose it is otherwise with the spiritual system? If sin carries penalties before death, it will carry them after death. The ancients were well assured of this. Says Plato in the

The Life of the Soul

“ Republic ” of the transgressor : “ When he finds that the sum of his transgressions is great, he will many a time like a child start up in his sleep for fear, and be filled with great forebodings.” And Ovid, that careless singer of love and wine, has in the “ Fasti ” a passage of a different tenor :

Ah, nimium faciles qui tristia crimina cædis
Flumina tolli posse putetis aqua.

“ Too easy are you in your view that flowing waters can carry away the sad crimes of blood ! ”

We may well fear, and with fear avoid, those future penalties ; the moral disorganisation, which sin brings, with pain and suffering in its train.

Yet what is the prospect here ? Is it that which Jonathan Edwards pictures of “ sinners in the hands of an angry God ” ; or that of the mediæval theology which taught that the saints in heaven would delight in watching the endless sufferings of the damned ? Such a doctrine, horrible in itself, is contrary to all the universe has taught us. What is physical pain ? It is never a vengeance, but always a warning signal, nature’s exclamation over a wrong state of things ; her call for help. And she brings her own help ; begins always her remedial process. And moral pain—the sense of guilt, the anguish of remorse—is the precise analogue in the spiritual world of physical pain. Here, too, is no vengeance, but the cry of warning, the appeal for change, for help. And pain and suffering, as we know them, are not destroyers, but healers. They are part of that process of evolution whose work is not downwards, but upwards, not towards ruin, but towards development. Can we think that this process will be reversed in any

The Price of Fear

future world ; that the upward striving of creation will be turned into one of senseless harrying and destroying ? We think too well of God to hold any such creed. We say rather with old Dr. Donne : “ Blessed be God that He is God, only and divinely like Himself.” To know Him is to reach that perfect love that casteth out fear. Let us keep the fear that preserves us from rash trifling with the eternal laws ; which keeps us in line with God’s purpose, instead of against it. But let us cast out the fear that paralyses ; that puts us under the heel of priests and dogmatists ; that clouds human life with needless terrors. Let us instead have the courage that believes in God, for all worlds, and for all eternities.

XXX

OF SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

A MAN is only half himself until he has found his brother man. Eve, according to tradition, shortened man's residence in Paradise. But the garden would have been no Paradise without her. Our soul comes to its life by virtue of the brother souls that surround it. It is to them we owe our language, our writing, our music, our work, our play, our peace, our war, our differences, our unities. Alone we should cease to be human. We should know nothing of the world ; nothing even of ourselves. Nature made us social. She has an odd way of putting us into positions without telling us beforehand anything about them. Without informing us as to the duties and responsibilities of the social life she began by placing us in a family. One of the first things we learn is to talk, and to listen to talk. And we have been talking and listening, on and off, ever since. Think of the number of speeches we have made, of the words that have rolled off our tongues since then ! A queer retrospect, when we come to think of it, with so much in it that is hardly golden. The world is carried on under a babel of utterance. Had we a universal telephone, we could hear it all—on the boulevards of Paris, in the cafés of Vienna, on the Exchange of London, in the bazaars of Constantinople ; —the talk in drawing-

Of Social Intercourse

rooms, in the streets, in the palaces of kings, in one-roomed homes—the harvest of one hour would be a literature, a unique human chronicle. There it is, such as it is, going on at this moment. There it is, forming characters, shaping destinies, making happiness and misery, the most tremendous thing in life, and yet the thing of which, in any deep sense, we take the least account. As we dressed ourselves this morning, did any of us think seriously as to the style and shape our day's conversation was to take, from what sources it was to be drawn, in what spirit it was to be carried on?

We are speaking here of our extempore utterance—the largest part of utterance. The diplomatist who is about to meet a foreign ambassador, the orator who has to address to-night a crowded audience, will doubtless go carefully over what he has to say. But most of our speech is not oratory, nor high politics. It is ourselves in undress, the word of the moment. Yet it is precisely here, in what we say, and hear said in ordinary intercourse, in the ceaseless giving and receiving of the mind's small change, we have the formative influences that make or mar us. Compared with this, as an influence on character, the great, carefully considered deliverances are as the effect of the occasional thunderstorms to the ceaseless work upon us of the ordinary atmosphere. What a man says to his wife or his child at the dinner table reveals him more surely than his finest eloquence from pulpit or rostrum.

It reveals, because it shows us at unawares; shows, not what we wish to be, not what we want the world to think of us, but what at the moment we are. Not that the revelation will necessarily be a dis-

The Life of the Soul

creditable one. If it discloses sometimes our worst, it often shows our best. Grant and Lee were both great men, and had done great things. But nothing to us is more interesting or delightful than the story of their meeting at the Appomattox Courthouse. For years they had been deadly foes. They had commanded opposing armies, which had inflicted enormous slaughter on each other. Their meeting now was at the crisis of their lives. Yet at sight of each other what happened? A beautiful and entirely human thing. To each of them rushed memories of earlier days, when they were together as comrades at West Point and in Mexico. Their talk ran on to old times, till at last Lee had to call Grant's attention to the object of their gathering, which was to surrender his beaten army to him, the conqueror! Their actual contact revealed what years of bloody warring could not wash out—that they were friends who esteemed each other. It is precisely this actual contact, this beating of heart close to heart, that destroys enmity. It was the fortune of the present writer to form one of a quartette who spent many days together in Norway. The other members were an Anglican canon, a Roman Catholic priest, and a Unitarian layman. We formed the happiest society, in which we discovered to our continual wonderment what a vast area of common ground our souls occupied. "If we go on like this," it was remarked, "what is to become of all our political, our theological, and our ecclesiastical animosities?" What, indeed! The secret of the coming world unity will lie in getting men together and in letting them talk at large.

Our main thought here is of the ethic of inter-

Of Social Intercourse

course, but we must not forget that there is, or rather has been, an art of it. Conversation, in our day, seems to have ceased to be a fine art. Perhaps we talk less because we do more. It was said of Moltke that he was silent in seven languages. Wellington was no talker. When called in as one of the chief advisers of the young Queen, he found himself at a loss. He complained to a friend, "I have no small talk, and Peel has no manners!" But the world has had its great talkers. If only we could recover some of it, what a literature we should have! Socrates said his best things in dialogue; the "Symposium" of Plato gives us a hint of what those Greeks could do. The Gospels give us fragments of the talks of Jesus. If only we could get a full report! And if there had been a Boswell at table when Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont, and the other great spirits of the time met at the "Mermaid," we should have had something as good as their comedies and tragedies. As a sheer art, conversation reached its highest level, in modern times, at least, in the period just before the French Revolution. In the salons of Mme. du Deffand and Mlle. de Lespinasse the French wit and brilliance flashed as never before or since. We are told of Diderot's conversation that it showed a verve, a wealth of ideas, a rushing, cumulative force that even his writings do not reveal. And across the Rhine, at Sans Souci, where D'Holbach, Voltaire, Algarotti, and the great Frederick kept the ball rolling, a listener tells us that if the talk could have been put into a book it would have equalled the finest literature. It was said of Mme. de Staël that, while not physically attractive, she could subdue any man if she talked to him for

The Life of the Soul

a quarter of an hour. How thankful we are that Johnson had his Boswell, and Goethe his Eckermann. What multitudes have delighted in the outflow of those rich minds over the dinner-table who are ignorant of "Rasselas," and who know nothing of the great German's "Theory of Colours!"

Some of the greatest passages in history were talk, or what arose out of it. We may well believe that some of the divinest things in the Fourth Gospel were spoken over the supper table in the upper chamber at Jerusalem. That must have been a memorable meal at Thermopylæ when Leonidas said to his friends, "Let us go to breakfast as we shall sup in Hades." What a talk, too, was that at the last banquet of the Girondists in the prison of the Abbaye, with the guillotine waiting for them on the morrow, when the noble Vergniaud thrilled his companions with a discourse on the immortality of the soul! One would have liked to hear what Milton said to Galileo when he visited him in Italy. "There it was that I found and visited Galileo, grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican licensers thought."

Religion, which begins first in the thought and feeling of some heaven-inspired soul, has found in every age its most effectual form of propagation in free, unfettered talk. Christianity was spread in this way before anything was written. We get a vivid idea of what went on in that passage of Irenæus on Polycarp: "I can tell also the very place where the blessed Polycarp was accustomed to sit and discourse . . . and his conversations with the people, and his familiar intercourse with John,

Of Social Intercourse

as he was accustomed to tell, as also his familiarity with those that had seen the Lord." One of the, to us, most refreshing things in Early Church history is the description given by Gregory Thaumaturgus of the spiritual fellowship enjoyed in the circle which had gathered round the beloved Origen. He found, he says, in these fellow-students "the true kinsmen of his soul." The day on which he met Origen was to him "the first day to me, the most precious of all days, since then for the first time the true sun began to rise upon me. For he [Origen] was possessed of a certain sweet grace and persuasiveness, along with a strange power of constraint." He speaks of their community as "that sacred fatherland where the sacred laws are declared. . . . and where by day and night we are still occupied with what the soul has seen and handled, and where the inspiration of divine things prevails over all continually."

Here was talk, the free outflow of a great soul, which fashioned men into saints and heroes. The Puritans were not afraid of religious conversation. Calamy said of Baxter that "he talked about another world like one that had been there, and was come as a sort of express from thence to make a report concerning it." We remember that a similar remark is made by Erasmus concerning Sir Thomas More. It was in the free intercourse of the Common Room at Lincoln College that Methodism was started. And later, in the Oriel Common Room, Newman's movement began. It is here, in this frank encounter of man with man, more than in set speech, that your spiritual genius shows himself. Of one of Wesley's intensest prophets of the second generation, William Bramwell, we read how he held whatever company

The Life of the Soul

he entered enthralled by the highest themes of inward religion. He would suffer nothing else. If another topic was introduced he would say, "Now we are wandering from the point," and lead them back to the one subject. What an armchair companion for the smoking room of a modern West-end club! In the early days of the Plymouth Brethren there was an Exeter dentist of whom it was said that "he had the habit of dropping sentences which changed people's lives!" These men were of the temper of that William Allen, the Quaker, who with another "Friend" journeyed to St. Petersburg to interview Tsar Alexander on religious subjects; actually gained admission to the autocrat, conversed with him on spiritual things, and left him profoundly impressed.

We do not get much of that type of conversation now. It is as if the things discussed no longer existed. And yet they do exist, and they are worth talking about. On the whole, one must admit that while the world has progressed in many ways, it shows little improvement in the matter of social intercourse. In some aspects of it it has gone backward. Where now do we get talk like that of Johnson or Goethe, or that of the French salon in the ante-Revolution days? How much of our fellowship is, so far as any intellectual or spiritual product is concerned, a sheer waste of time—that most precious of our possessions! How often it is a mere gabble, and a venomous gabble at that! One can understand the action of the Society lady who remained always to the end of a function, because, as she said, she was sure she would be torn to pieces if she left anybody behind! Have we

Of Social Intercourse

improved on the social condition described by Pascal? "If people knew exactly what was said about them there would not be four friends in the world"! Locker-Lampson, in one of his nonsense-verses, has hit off with sufficient accuracy the modern scheme of society :

They eat and drink, and scheme and plot,
And go to church on Sunday,
And many are afraid of God,
And more of Mrs. Grundy.

Fairly accurate, we say, with the reservation that now they do not "go to church on Sunday." No wonder that the best minds keep more and more away from this chatter-world. They can employ themselves so much better. One feels with Seneca : "Never do I return home in the same moral condition as when I went out." And with Nietzsche : "Among many people I live like the many and do not think like myself. It always seems to me that they wish to banish me from myself and rob me of my soul."

The remedy for all this is hardly to banish ourselves from society ; is it not rather to lay in some stock of principles for our conduct in it ? And one of these is an edict of banishment against scandal so far as our personal talk is concerned. And that will not be a negative principle. It is easy to see why people fall so readily into backbiting. It is because they have nothing else to say. It is on the same principle that bargees fill their sentences with lurid expletives. The habit is not really a vicious one. It is a consequence of their lack of adjectives. They have not the resources of Dean Swift, who confounded a cursing Irish fishwife

The Life of the Soul

by calling her an isosceles triangle and other epithets culled from Euclid. Scandal is simply the conversational resource of empty minds—and the remedy is to fill our minds with other themes and interests. And here it should be our business not simply to carry our best into the common exchange, but to help others to bring out their best. The wise conversationalist will have in his mind a signal-box apparatus, full of levers for keeping trains on their proper lines. Such an art is perhaps more needed in the domestic circle than in the discursive talk of the salon. How many a quarrel-spoiled home would regain its peace if one of its members kept an eye on the signal-box ! It takes two to make a quarrel. If a given line will lead to a collision, why not turn the points ? It is easy enough. The quick, impetuous natures, whose explosion point is so soon reached, have nearly always a fund of generosity in them. Touch that, and their weapon falls. In our intimate fellowships, to be put in charge of a difficult nature, to help it by our patience and love to a truer command of itself, to a readier access to its own best,—is not this the most sacred of trusts—the one where we may win the noblest, most godlike of victories ?

The world's true social intercourse is yet to seek. It is an affair of so many more things than speech. To reach it we shall need a new social system ; a system in which every man will realise his relation to his fellow, and find his joy in contributing to that fellow's welfare. That means a vast breaking down of barriers, a vast opening up of new sympathies. Our present condition is one of irreligious barbarism. If Christ came again among us, do we think He would

Of Social Intercourse

travel in a first-class carriage, or in the saloon of the *Mauretania*? You would find him in the third-class, and in the steerage of the liner. He would go there to seek the true humanness of humanity. If He came to London, think you He would be satisfied with a West-end where souls are crushed out by enormous luxuries, and an East-end where in numberless homes people eat and drink, sleep, get ill and die in one room? While these things exist let us not call ourselves Christian, or even civilised. Plainly we are only at the beginning of our task as human beings. We shall never be right with God, or with His universe, till we have set about in earnest to be right with our neighbour.

XXXI

ON DOING THINGS

WE are all doing things ; but have we ever tried, with any thoroughness, to penetrate into the meaning of our doing ? “ In the beginning was the Word ; in the beginning was the Thought ; in the beginning was the Deed,” says Goethe, leaving us to ponder the riddle of that threefold alternative. Doubtless these all lay in the beginning ; were concerned in it. How they were related in that primal start we may perhaps never know. It is the cosmic secret, and we shall not here concern ourselves with it. What we want is to trace, as far as we can, the significance of that third beginner ; the meaning to us of doing, of action. Questions arise, vastly important questions, as to what it counts for in the philosophy of life, in the framing of character, in the creation of belief, in the whole business of morality and religion. We are getting some new light on these subjects. We have hitherto been so busy that we have hardly had time to think about our busyness. But we are thinking about it now, and in a way which is likely to produce some considerable changes, both of theory and practice, in the questions we have mentioned.

Says Fichte, in the “ *Bestimmung des Menschen*,” or “ *Vocation of Man*,” that noble product of one of the noblest minds : “ Not merely to know, but

On Doing Things

according to thy knowledge to *do*, is thy vocation ; not for idle contemplation of thyself ; not for nursing devout sensations ; no, for action art thou here ; thine action, and thine action alone, determines thy worth." That is a saying which is easily assailable. Might we not say, in the Latin phrase, *operari sequitur esse* : " doing follows being, is according to being." Should we not, therefore, seek for quality of being before we talk of doing ? To which the answer is, that it is only by doing that we get to being ; only in action do we reach our true selves. That, to begin with, is evidently the way in which eternal being has sought to realise itself. We could imagine the Divine thought as resting in an eternal contemplation of itself. Or we can imagine it as pondering eternally over the choice between all the possible modes of action. We can imagine it even as so conscious of the perils of action as to determine not to act. That has not been its way. We find ourselves in a universe where the decisions have been taken, where the greatest things have been done. Philosophers have amused themselves by imagining systems which would have been so vast an improvement on the one that exists. But doubtless all the possible ones had been considered before the advent of our philosophers. The fact, the wonderful fact, is that, out of them all, one has been chosen ; this one in which we are. The adverse possibilities were all dared, and the thing started on these lines. The great Beginner sets the example to all other beginners by doing something ; by daring something ; by doing and daring *this* ! May we not say that it was only by doing and daring that He could realise Himself ?

The Life of the Soul

It is an aside from the argument we want here to pursue, but may we not pause a moment to contemplate the scale on which this doing has been accomplished? We are full to-day of our machineries, our manufactures, our inventions, our discoveries. But what is all this activity of ours compared with that other activity we come into, an activity which has been going on with clockwork regularity through countless millions of years? We build ships that rush the seas at thirty knots an hour. What of this world-ship we are all sailing in, that ploughs with unerring movement the depths of space, whose endless cycle gives us our seasons, and measures for us the years of our life? Talk of speed; talk of horse-power! Add together the forces of all our enginery, and compared with this enginery, they are as the flick of a finger; they do not affect its movement by a hairsbreadth. What a noise we make with our fevered industries! The planet which carries them all moves without a sound. Man's forces are noisy because they are so puny. The world movement, which contains them as a grain of sound on its surface, knows the secret of perfect silence. And yet this stupendous planetary machine, so immeasurably old, so enduringly young, so stupendous in its silent power, is but a speck in a solar system which is itself but a speck in the infinite universe of worlds. The doing here has been on a royal scale.

But let us get closer home. Our main concern here is with ourselves, and we want now to show how it is by action, and action alone, that we can get our proper bearings in life; that thus only can we reach truth and goodness. We say truth for one

On Doing Things

thing; for it is only by doing that we can touch truth. Were we to content ourselves with thinking, with mere speculation, we should find ourselves speedily in a universal scepticism. How, for instance, do we know there is an outside world? When you say you see things, or hear things, or touch them, is not all that you have here a certain modification of your own consciousness? What relation have these sensations of sight, sound, touch, to the things in themselves? And what reality is there in your own consciousness? May it not be a mere dream? How can you be sure that it contains in itself the fact of things? Does not your intellect play all manner of tricks with you? Did not Zeno, in an argument to which none of his contemporaries could find an answer, prove the impossibility of motion?

And, in the same way in which, by mere thinking, you can reduce the outer world into a mere affair of your own sensations, you can destroy the fabric of all morality. Has not everything been determined beforehand? Is not your nature, with all its desires and impulses, an affair of pre-existing conditions; of your physical and moral ancestry, of the play upon you of outside forces beyond your control? Are not all these forces, those around you, and those behind of the past, part of a system of iron causation, in which every link is bound to all other links, all of which in their place and quality have been determined by an invincible necessity? Why, then, talk of being good or bad? Are not you a part of nature which, indifferently, makes here a toad and there a lion, and by the same law makes here a great man and there an ignoble one? If there

The Life of the Soul

is any blame here must we not put it on nature and not on ourselves ?

What is the deliverance from all this tangle ? It is always and everywhere by action that we free ourselves. It was by walking about that Zeno's contemporaries made sure that his argument, that the hare and tortoise argument, had a fallacy in it somewhere. Bergson, better than any later thinker, has supplied the intellectual refutation, but it was action, first and all along, that has made men believe inmotion. We find our outside world in the same way ; by acting, always acting as if it were there, and were what it professes to be ; and by finding our action always justified by results. And in the moral sphere it is the same. We act here as though we were morally free agents, able to choose between good and evil, and we find that the moral system responds to our action. It justifies our faith. The moral struggle assures us that we are not machines, but free agents, creating our character by a moral volition. By doing, we reach the conviction of a world above nature, a world of the inner life, whose laws are other than those of force and necessity ; above them, using them for its higher ends. In our contact with the visible world, as in our contact with the invisible, we live by faith. For action is simply faith in operation. It were impossible except for a belief in the truth of things ; and it is rewarded by the response which all things, visible and invisible, make to it. "*So lange man strebt, glaubt man ; und so lange man glaubt, strebt man.*" " So long as we strive we believe, and so long as we believe we strive." It is, in fact, in doing things that we create ourselves. Action is the

On Doing Things

proof, the declaration of our freedom. By it we bring into being something that was never in the world before—our character, our personality. And when, in the exercise of our free volition, in obedience to the inner call of the spirit, we go on choosing the good, we find in the act itself the assurance of a foothold in a higher realm, a possession there, from which no reasoning can shake us, for it is rooted in the deeps of consciousness. We know ourselves as of a kingdom of the Unseen, whose laws are above those of matter, and whose possessions are secure from all material assault.

Doing things is the ground plan of evolution, and it is also the ground plan of all sane religion. The saying of Coleridge, "All things strive to ascend, and ascend by their striving," contains the whole scheme of creation so far as we can see it. In every living thing, in vegetable, in animal, in man himself, there is a principle of movement, an instinct after the more, an instinct which is the pledge of eternal progress. And here note that as in the lower creation, so pre-eminently in man, the movement comes, not from outside, but ever from within. In neglecting, or evading that fact, we find some of the most fatal mistakes in morality and religion. There is here all the difference in the world between doing a thing yourself and having something done for you by someone else. There is no greater immorality in the world than a doctrine which tells a man his whole salvation is secured by just believing in the work, the sacrifice of another. That is a theological salvation from a theological condemnation, a salvation of theory rather than of fact. The sacrifice of Christ, the salvation wrought by

The Life of the Soul

Him, was a doing, which ever invites our doing. Salvation ! From what, pray ? From God's wrath ? But it was not God's wrath but His love that sent Christ into the world. Jesus said to the adulterous woman, " Hath no man condemned thee ? Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin no more." Is not that the Divine attitude ? Where is the wrath there ? He has nothing to say to this woman's past, bad though it were, except to be done with it, and to begin again. Your salvation is truly of God ; but of Him through yourself ; from your lower self into a higher one. And this ever by your own act ; by the act of faith which appropriates God's grace ; by the free acceptance of His holy will ; by the energy of obedience to His inward call. " This do and thou shalt live " is religion's first and final word.

It is with these principles to guide us that we are beginning at last to discern between the true and false methods of education. We are spending millions annually, and uncountable hours of educational time, in filling our children's brains with things that have no relation to their actual life. This is true both of our public and our common schools. Sydney Smith said that he supposed he had made ten thousand Latin verses as a scholar, and had never put his hand to one since. And how much of the mental drill of the people's school is of the same category ? Our very amusements to-day consist more in watching other people, professional people, do things, instead of doing them ourselves. Real education consists in training people to action, to the action which will make them experts in their own life-struggle ; it is to bring them into actual contact with reality, and show them how to deal

On Doing Things

with it. And this training never comes by reading about things, by watching other people do them. Botany is not in the books, but in the flowers ; mechanics are not in theorems, but in the handling of tools. The education of the labourer should be, above all things, an education for his work ; and of the labourer's sister a training for her work. Our present system is one apparently for making our boys and girls into clerks and typewriters. One of the worst results of it all is to fill their minds with the idea that book knowledge is higher than fact knowledge, that to spell words is better than to handle things. By all means let our young people have literature, if they want it. But surely the first thing for them is to make them effective for life's battle, to make the school the starting-point for the perfect craftsman, for the perfect housewife. It should be the place also where the idea should be instilled—an idea which will destroy our present snobbery—that efficiency in labour is the first certificate of character and standing ; that to know how to do things ourselves is so infinitely better than a rote acquired knowledge of how other people have done them. We all of us need a better education here. Ought a man to marry until he knows how, if occasion arises, to run the household himself, to nurse his wife and to work for her, if need be ? Education of the true sort is nothing more or less than the training of us, by actual experience, to be expert helpers over the widest area of service.

It is by doing things that life's most difficult problems are solved. The beneficence of the world order is nowhere more effectively displayed than in the number of things it offers us to do. Your depres-

The Life of the Soul

sion, your black melancholy, lasts as long as you sit idle, contemplating your woe. Shall you ever get over the grief of this bereavement, this loss of your dearest interest? But your work claims you, and its call, you find, is your salvation. As, at its command, you put forth your energy, the blood begins to flow again in your veins, your soul lives once more, your bruised heart finds its easement. This blessedness of doing! It is the magician's wand which turns the dreariest desert into a garden. The late William James, in one of his essays, describes his experiences during and after the earthquake at San Francisco. He was in the neighbourhood at the time, and on the spot immediately after the event. What astounded him most, he says, was the cheerfulness, the positive high spirits of the ruined populace. Everyone had lost something, many of them their all. But then—everything was to be done, and the doing of it seemed not only to have absorbed their energies but to have filled them with a new content. There they were; with a huge gap in their fortunes; but then they had their bodies and their brains, and everything to do! The gap, what was it but a glorious call to show the stuff they were made of? What happened there is happening everywhere. Were every city in the world reduced to ashes to-morrow our race would be little the poorer; its sum of happiness barely decreased. It would go to work again, joyous in the business of making better cities than the old ones.

Let us hail man as the maker, the doer. There lies his pre-eminence, and also his glorious liberty. All that is around and behind, so much of which cramps and confines us—our laws, our institutions,

On Doing Things

our moralities, our theologies, are, be it ever remembered, man's work, and what man has made he can unmake and remake. The old dogmatic systems, which for long ages have had their iron hand upon us ; what of them ? They are all a human affair ; and we are human, as good as these old makers, perhaps better. What they had of truth in them we will take ; but they shall tyrannise over us not for an hour. Our systems shall not be theirs, but ours, such as shall fit our wider knowledge and not their narrower one. Most of all, in making things we are making ourselves. The deeds we do, in obedience to the higher, the spiritual law, are forces projected into that unseen world to which our spirits belong. They may seem a failure here, but they are a success there. When we follow them into that unseen we shall find them again ; find them and ourselves again, as part of a diviner order, an endless destiny.

XXXII

THE LIFE BEYOND

MAN is the great adventurer of this planet. Every new day is for him a leap into the unknown. But his greatest adventure is death. And note here how his surest knowledge is linked with his greatest ignorance. Everyone of us is sure that he will die. And not one of us knows what awaits him the moment after. About that moment there are faiths innumerable, some noble, some eccentric, some perverse. But neither science, philosophy, nor religion has here any certain answer. There is the wonder, the mystery, the fascination of human life ; that, unlike the races beneath it, its ancient fellow travellers, it marches forward with a clear, overpowering sense of the leap that has to be taken, but with no word as to the ground on which it will land. The ruling power, for ends of its own, has kept that secret. The old Greek adage, " Man teaches us to talk ; the gods teach us to keep silence," has here its strongest illustration. The " gods " indeed, in this matter show a magnificent reticence. Their motto might be " Wait and see ! " But this order of things was assuredly not to bar us off from the theme. For the sure fact of death, and the knowledge of it which attends us all our days, is the most urgent of invitations to consider it, and to inquire into the after of it. Höffding has here a remark

The Life Beyond

which is true in a sense. Says he : “ The exhortation “ ‘ Take no thought for the morrow,’ can be applied with far greater justification to the life after death, than to our attitude towards the actual morrow of our earthly life.” That is true of anxious, worrying, morbid thought. But nature has offered no injunction against, she has offered the greatest possible incitement towards a faith on this theme, and an accordant practice. She offers us a faith without words. She gives us life, with all its natural, moral and spiritual contents. Into this she thrusts the fact of death, and seems to say, “ Here is your fact ; make what you can of it ! ”

Most remarkable is the thing that man has made of it. Death has been the creator of his religious faith. Had there been no death ; had man gone on living permanently in this world, there would have been no religion as we know it. The human mind—its motives, its aspirations, its hopes, its fears—would have been an entirely different thing. Its whole moral structure has been determined by these two considerations : “ You have a short life here, a certain fact ; you have the suggestion of a further life beyond, a matter of faith.” These are the points on which hang all our law and all our prophets. One indubitable certainty, one enormous possibility. But the possibility has also its certainty. You may doubt as to the realisation of the possibility. What is beyond doubt is the enormous, the controlling influence which that possibility has had upon man’s inner and spiritual development. It has, we say, created all our religions, and a vast part of our moralities. If there is a reason, as there seems to be, for everything in this universe ; if things work in

The Life of the Soul

relation to ends ; there must be some reason, and a vastly important one, for placing the soul under the governing force of these two strangely assorted factors.

The strange thing here is that the idea of an after life, which has exerted this controlling effect, is one which at every point is exposed to doubt, is opposed to the sense verdicts, is debatable by the reason. In place of a certainty we are offered a mystery, a riddle, to which the mind gives various answers. Death puts an end to all the activities with which we have associated the living person. What is left becomes a decaying, corrupting mass, which we put out of our sight. And the fortunes of the inhabiting mind seem so indissolubly bound up with the body that the disintegration of the one irresistibly suggests the disintegration and ending of the other. Lucretius puts the staggering fact in his own uncompromising way :

*Præterea, gigni pariter cum corpore et una
Crescere sentimus, pariterque senescere mentem.*

“ Besides, we see the mind to be born with the body, to grow with the body, and to decay with it.”

Poor Lucretius ! His doubt did not make him happy, for he committed suicide at the end. But his argument is a formidable one, which has had a deciding weight with many minds. But his negative solution is no final one. It has not killed the great possibility, which lives still, and more strongly than ever, in the hearts of men. We are full of doubts about *his* doubt. He might have argued from the facts so differently. It might have occurred to him that if the bodily form decays and disappears, its substance, its elements, are here still, immortal,

The Life Beyond

indestructible. And if that is true of the visible part of the personality, may not that be true of the invisible part? Benjamin Constant, a free-thinker, if ever there was one, found himself up against this possibility at the death-bed of his friend, Mme. Talma. Seeing her as retaining all her mind and soul, though all her bodily organs were almost destroyed, he asks: "Why should death, which is only the completion of this feebleness, destroy the soul which that feebleness had not impaired?" Doubtless the materialist will here reply: "Ah, but her brain was still intact. When that went, she went." Very convincing to him doubtless. To us it is on all fours with the argument that the destruction of the instrument means the destruction of the player. Beethoven can no longer play his sonata when you have smashed his keyboard. But is the smashing of his keyboard the smashing of Beethoven?

The fact is that life, as we now possess it, is in itself so astounding a miracle, so contrary to all the antecedent probabilities of there ever being such a thing, that in comparison with it that other probability of its prolongation beyond death offers infinitely minor difficulties both to the reason and the imagination. What would the mere reason have to say as to the antecedent likelihood of a single germ cell, which it takes a microscope to distinguish, developing into the body, mind, soul of a cultivated twentieth century man? And yet this impossible becomes a fact. It is the commonness of our miracle that hides from us its astounding quality.

But is it the intellect that, after all, has most to do with this idea and persuasion, so obstinate in the human heart, of a life beyond? We prefer to think

The Life of the Soul

of it as something deeper than the intellect ; as an instinct, as something wrapped up in the very essence and fibre of the soul. Kant, than whom these later ages have seen no deeper thinker, felt all this. After a merciless criticism of the theoretic proofs of immortality current in his time, he finds in what he calls the moral or practical reason the evidence which satisfied him. He recalls the fact that in animals all the instincts have a definite aim and purpose ; that nothing in them is superfluous and apart from use. Then he adds : " According to this analogy man, who alone can contain within himself the final end of all this, must needs be the only creature that is an exception to the principle. For not only his native capacities, but the moral law within him, go far beyond all advantage to be derived from them in the present life. . . . They instruct him, in the absence of all advantages, yes, even of the shadowy hope of posthumous fame, to esteem the mere consciousness of rectitude above all else, and to feel an inner call by his conduct in this world to make himself worthy to be the citizen of a better." We may well reiterate Kant's question here. Are the instincts which work with such accuracy in the animal kingdom, all abroad where man is their subject ? Are they right when they urge the homing swallow on its pathless way, when they make the squirrel prepare for winter scarcity of food, and all wrong when they urge man to ideal conduct based on the sense of a life beyond ?

It is, perhaps, not so much the abstract idea of a life beyond, but the consideration of the form it may take, which has most befogged and staggered the modern mind. All kinds of embarrassing ques-

The Life Beyond

tions crop up. Something, people say, may survive, but what is it? Is it a personality, the same personality that we now carry in us? We remember here Hume's argument that we have no continuous personality; that all we possess is a series of fleeting impressions without any ascertainable causal link. Might it not have occurred to Hume that the very fact of his observing this moving stream required a certain unity in himself, a *punctum stans* as it were, from which he could mark this flow? If all in him were only a part of the movement, how could he ascertain it was only a movement? Can we know anything of time movements apart from something in us that is beyond time, and from that outside point can mark its flow? One has a similar feeling about Sainte Beuve's outburst, "Every day I change . . . Before the final death of the mobile being who calls himself by my name, how many men will already have died in me?" Yes, but here again, what was it that, in Sainte Beuve, was capable of recognising these changes and judging them as taking place within him? Is there no more here than the changes? Is the judge that calls them changes part of them; or something outside and beyond them; a unity that, because it is a unity, can recognise and tabulate these diversities? And if that unity, the essential "I" of our consciousness, subsists in us despite all the transmutations of life, despite all the numberless molecular changes of our body, all the varying stages of our mental being, is it not to this centre, which has survived so much, that we must look as survivor of the last change of all?

But that personality; what, then, is to happen to it? The present writer has been, from time to time,

The Life of the Soul

the recipient of letters which reveal at once the bewilderment and the torturing interest which on this question assail the modern mind and heart. If our friends who pass from us survive, what will there be left in them which we in our turn can recognise? Will not this very development place an impassable gulf between them and ourselves? A loved child dies from the household. Its anguished parents live on thirty, forty years after. If there is a meeting in the after life of these sundered ones, what will there be to meet? People ask this with a kind of despair. And yet the very question suggests its answer. Supposing the child had lived, would not the parents have as surely lost it as a child as they do by its dying? In the thirty following years what is left of the child? It is a grown man or woman they have now with them. Of the child there are left only the early portraits. Yet the joy and happiness of the relationship are there through all the changes, there with additions and enrichments. And if the personality, working in this way on our present side of death, amid all changes, keeps the best of the parental and filial relationships, why should we imagine the farther side so poor in resource as not to have its own preservations and adaptations there?

Another difficulty which, if our correspondence may be trusted, obsesses the modern mind, is what we may call the too great generosity of the after-life idea. "Are we to suppose that all the wretched specimens of humanity that have dwelt on this earth—savages, Hottentots, brutes with neither heart nor mind, are still to go on cumbering the universe? What of the countless myriads of them? Is it not

The Life Beyond

better to consider them as cleared out, to make room for something better?" As to room, it is a tolerably wide universe, which shows no sign of overcrowding at present. It finds room for every particle of matter, however low its scale. If it assures an endless continuance of matter, what reason is there against that of spirit! Certainly there is room enough for that! We have here a curious adaptation of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest, which appears in the most varied forms and quarters. Victor Hugo expresses it in his belief in a future life for the *élite*, including himself. Tom Paine, the terror of the orthodox of his day, held that good people would certainly enjoy a life to come, the bad people would meet there with some punishment, while people whose lives appeared to have no significance at all would probably drop out altogether. This idea of inferior, insignificant people being preserved in their inferiority and insignificance on the other side seems to have specially stirred the bile of Thomas Huxley. One remembers the famous letter of his to the Committee of the Dialectical Society, in which he was invited to attend a *séance*. After expressing his belief that mediums were humbugs, he added that if he were offered a special faculty by which he could overhear the chatter of old women and curates of the nearest provincial town he should decline it, having something better to do. The chatter on the other side, as far as reported, was entirely of that order, and he wanted none of it.

It is to be noted that the presuppositions which lie behind all these views are of one order. They agree in despising the mean, the undistinguished, the insignificant, as unworthy of preservation—at least,

The Life of the Soul

in their insignificance—in another sphere. If there is to be a supernatural, it is to be on a great scale, something supremely grand or supremely terrible ; at any rate, of a totally different character from anything we know of here. We may have hell or heaven, or annihilation outright ; anything rather than a population of old women and curates, of nobodies, with all their nobodyhood about them, on that farther side. But is that nature's way, the nature we know now ? *Natura non facit saltus* (nature does not take leaps) is one of the working mottoes of science. We may vary it, and so come nearer the truth, by saying that she never makes farther leaps than are necessary. Her changes are the least violent that can accomplish her purpose. And if that is her order in the sphere we know, may we not argue that this is her way in the realms beyond our vision ? If our old women chatter here, why may they not chatter there ? Why may it not be—all analogy suggests it is—that after the great passage, we all, great and small, inferior, contemptible and grand, take up our lives precisely where we left them, to start, amid these new conditions, in their farther evolution ? May we not here, in default of contrary evidence, trust to the nature we know ; nature, which changes everything, but destroys nothing ; nature which fits her creatures to their environment, gives to each class and quality its own place ; nature who, in her splendid generosity, gives to her poorest, meanest things, as well as to her greatest personal creations, their share of life and of enjoyment ?

It is, of course, in a chapter of these dimensions, impossible to discuss a theme like this on all its sides.

The Life Beyond

It will be noted that we have left out the special considerations of the question arising out of the Christian theology. Our readers are acquainted with them, and know their value. We will only remark here that the contribution of Christianity to this question is more in the direction of that moral instinct on which Kant relied than to the reasonings of formal logic. Christianity, in the theological presentation of it, has often been wrong in its head. But its errors there have been abundantly counter-balanced by the superb quality of its heart power. By the immense reinforcement it has offered to the spiritual development of man it has increased in that degree the force of the argument for a further sphere in which the soul, which it has so immeasurably enriched, shall proceed to its full height of blessedness. The resurrection faith is not only a fact of its history, it is in the line of all that nature suggests ; it is an answer, out of herself, to the deepest, highest instinct of the human heart.

THE LIFE BEYOND

BY

JOHN RUSSELL

95229
Brierley, J.

204R
B766a

The life of the soul

204R
B766a

95229

